















# *Marriage and Family Counseling*

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# *Marriage and Family Counseling*

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A MANUAL FOR  
MINISTERS, DOCTORS, LAWYERS, TEACHERS,  
SOCIAL WORKERS, AND OTHERS ENGAGED  
IN COUNSELING SERVICE

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BY

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MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

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*To*

ELEANORE AND HUGO

BEATRICE AND HARVEY

AND

THEIR CHILDREN

WITH

LOVE AND BENEDICTION



## PREFACE

This introduction to marriage and family counseling has grown out of a long and instructive experience. As associate rabbi and director of Social Service of the Free Synagogue since its founding in 1907 I have met a multitude of men and women in distress because of marital and family difficulties. These men and women have come from different races, religions, nationalities, and social groups. As professor of social service in the Jewish Institute of Religion since its organization in 1922 I have had the opportunity of giving courses on marriage and the family and of discussing marriage and family problems with class after class of young men. As a member of the National Conference of Family Relations, the New York State Conference on Marriage and the Family, the Jewish Institute on Marriage and the Family, and the Committee on Marriage, the Family, and the Home of the Central Conference of American Rabbis I have enjoyed the privilege of meeting with the leaders in the field of marriage and family service. In both committees and conferences we have considered carefully the problems we are facing in family life today.

In studying my experience and in organizing the material for this book I have found that the major problems of marriage and family life fall into five categories: the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, the ethical or spiritual. The problems, however, are seldom simple; they are as a rule complex. The distress is due not to one but to a number of factors. It is therefore necessary to examine every circle of life in which the cause or causes of distress may be discovered: the circle of the individual, the circle of the family, the home, the neigh-

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borhood, the occupational life, and the still larger circle of the social organization, composed of the cultural, economic, and political segments. Upon the thoroughness with which these concentric circles are explored depend the correctness of the diagnosis and the adequacy of the plan of treatment.

The technique that has gradually evolved in the course of the years is composed of a number of elements. These elements are derived from the different disciplines with which I have found it necessary to acquaint myself: the law, medicine, psychology and psychiatry, social work, home economics, and religious concepts and codes. This technique is, I realize, still in the earliest formative stage. As our knowledge of the family expands and our experience deepens, new understanding of the problems will come to us, new and richer insights will appear, and new and more refined skills will be developed. The one thing we must remember is that the family must be studied in the light of its own origin and composition and evolution. The family differs from other social institutions in fundamental ways and is governed by its own laws. When we understand the laws of the family better, we shall be able to serve the members of the family with greater intelligence and clearer foresight.

The program of service that is presented in this volume is based in part upon the work now being done in consultation centers in different communities, but in largest measure it is formulated to meet the needs that the family encounters in these days of danger and crisis. The changes that are taking place within the framework of the family, in the structure, the organization, the function, the very foundations on which the family rests, the disruptions, and the disintegration that is apparent in family life—these conditions that lead to conflicts constitute a challenge to every student of marriage and the

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family. The program that we outline and develop must be designed to meet the current and acute needs.

I trust earnestly that this interpretation of my experience and the conclusions I have reached and expressed may be of some service to others in the field of marriage and family counseling and that they will share with me their own experiences and interpretations. This introductory study and presentation will soon lead, I am certain, to a more complete program for the protection of marriage, the conservation of the family, and the enlargement and enrichment of the contributions that the family alone can make to the development of the human personality and to the advancement of social progress.

More deeply than I can express, I feel indebted to the group of men and women who have graciously cooperated with me in the preparation of this volume: to Prof. Ernest R. Groves and Prof. Ernest W. Burgess, who reviewed the section on Family Counseling; to Dr. L. Foster Wood and Dr. Emily S. Mudd, who reviewed the section on The Pre-Marital Conference; to Mrs. Evelyn M. Duvall and Miss Gladys Gaylord, who reviewed the section on The Consultation Center; to Miss Lilo Stern, who transcribed and corrected the entire text and helped to prepare the Index. To all these men and women and the many others who have been frank in their comments and constructive in their criticisms I feel profoundly grateful, for without their encouragement and confidence this task would have been doubly difficult.

I also wish to thank the Bloch Publishing Company and the editors of "The American Family," "Marriage and Family Living," and "Religious Education," who have generously allowed me to incorporate material printed in their publications.

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SIDNEY E. GOLDSTEIN.



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## FOREWORD

This manual is addressed particularly to persons engaged in marriage and family counseling as a part of their normal professional service. Doctors, lawyers, ministers, and teachers have always served as counselors to people in trouble. Social workers not only have assisted families in economic distress but increasingly are dealing with their psychological and social adjustments.

In the past, however, counseling was, for the most part, the application of the mores to personal, marital, and familial problems. The minister, the teacher, and the lawyer, as representatives of the institutions which maintained the mores and the moral standards of the community, were preeminently fitted to prescribe the correct and right course of conduct to their parishioners, students, and clients. The physician and social worker also were generally guided in giving advice by the conventions of society.

The publication of this book is one of the several portents that marriage and family counseling is now in a transition from the aegis of the mores to the teachings of applied science. Lawyers, ministers, nurses, physicians, and teachers no longer find the traditional prescriptions of conduct adequate as guides to young people in a modern age. The currents of social life run swiftly in a generation reared with the new facilities of transportation and communication—the automobile, the motion picture, and the radio. Young people are breaking out of the confines of the neighborhood and the control of its institutions. They no longer, as formerly, rely upon their

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parents for advice. They are turning to other sources, and, especially at the college level, they are asking, "What are the findings of the biological, psychological, and social sciences upon problems of marriage, of the family, and of effective living?"

In this volume Dr. Goldstein makes available to those who are engaged in part-time counseling the results of the wisdom he has garnered from his wealth of experience, his wide reading of the literature, and his reflection upon the varied problems presented to him in his many years of counseling service. It is hoped that other counselors will be stimulated by his example to make similarly available their methods and their experience. It is through the finding and results of the work of counselors coming into this field with different viewpoints and backgrounds of training that ultimately we will increase our store of concepts, of diagnostic skills, of techniques, of advice, so that they will be adequate for the delicate and difficult art of counseling human beings.

The war has greatly increased the problems of marriage and the family because of hasty marriages, by reason of the separation of husband and wife, and by the almost inevitable relaxing for children and youth of the normal peace-time controls of the family and the community. The difficulties of marital and familial adjustment will be accentuated in the postwar period, not only by the dislocations of demobilization of servicemen but also by the shift from wartime to peace-time economy. Hasty and ill-advised marriages will take place both on the part of engaged couples who have delayed their marriages and marry quickly before ascertaining if separation has made for irreconcilable changes in values and interests, and on the part of other unmarried young people who will tend to marry without the safeguard of a sufficient period of acquaintance and engagement to test the durability of

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the relationship. Without any question, the postwar period will lay heavy demands upon the part-time and the full-time counselor.

Two recent events show the increasing trend to the professional approach in marriage and family counseling. The administration of the University of North Carolina has freed Prof. Ernest R. Groves, pioneer in the field of preparation for marriage and family living, from his undergraduate teaching of courses in the family and preparation for marriage, in order that he may devote full time to organizing and to developing graduate instruction in training full-time workers in marriage counseling and in family-life education. This is unquestionably a great forward step in the creation of a new profession of marriage and family counseling and education.

The second event was the action of the National Conference on Family Relations in selecting from its membership (composed of persons engaged in teaching, research, and professional service in all the various fields of marriage and the family) six committees to consider the question of professional training of full-time and of part-time workers in marriage counseling. At its meeting in Chicago, June 18-20, 1944, these committees met to formulate (a) the needs for counseling, (b) the present program, and (c) a realizable program of education for marriage and family counseling for the professions of law, of the ministry, of nursing, of newspaper and radio marital counseling, and for the training of the full-time worker in marriage and family counseling.

The reports of these different committees will be submitted to the institutions of professional training and to professional associations for their consideration and discussion. In the coming years increasing demands for counseling will be placed upon doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers, newspaper columnists, and advisers on the

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radio. They should be prepared by their professional training to perform this important function.

Essential, as Dr. Goldstein emphasizes, is the establishment in every city of a marriage counseling center staffed with full-time workers combining in their training and experience the knowledge from the different life sciences. This center not only will serve as a place of referral but will be a clearing house of information upon community resources. It should also assume the leadership, in cooperation with other organizations and agencies, in attempting to raise the standards of counseling service in the community. It can be of great assistance in developing insight and understanding on the part of the ministers, the nurses, the physicians, and the teachers so that they may be able to discriminate between cases with minor problems with which they are equipped to deal and the more serious problems which should be referred to the central marriage counseling agency.

Marriage counseling is an emerging profession. Dr. Goldstein has made a definite and valuable contribution by providing a manual for those who will be engaged in part-time service in this important field.

ERNEST W. BURGESS,  
*University of Chicago.*

# MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### THE NEW EMPHASIS

During the last generation the emphasis in the field of marriage and the family has shifted at a number of significant points. In the first place, it is important to note, forty years ago our chief if not our sole interest was in the evil of divorce. We were at that time concerned with the rapid increase in the number of divorces, with the grounds for divorce as stated in the divorce laws of the different states, with the causes that lay in back of the grounds assigned. Some believed that the solution would be found in making divorce more difficult; others were of the opinion that it would be wiser to liberalize divorce laws in all the states. Our endeavors were directed toward improvement in divorce legislation, the formulation of a uniform divorce law to be adopted by all the states in the union, and a Federal program. Today we have come to understand that we began our study at the wrong end. The major cause of divorce, we now realize, is to be found in marriage itself, that is, in the wrong kind of marriage. It is therefore necessary for us to study the conditions of marriage, to discover the conditions that will insure a maximum amount of happi-

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ness and that will avert the greatest degree of insecurity. In the social laboratories the studies now being conducted are designed to reveal the factors that will predict, as far as is humanly possible, failure or success in married life.

In the second place, a change of emphasis has occurred in our concern with the person or persons of whom the family is composed. Thirty-five years ago the child was the center of our concern. The high death rate of babies during their first year of life, fifteen out of every one hundred born alive; the excessive incidence of sickness in childhood diseases and the disturbing mortality, especially from diphtheria; the crippling effect of child labor upon the mind and spirit of youth—all these and other facts compelled us to address ourselves to the dangers that threatened the childhood of the nation. Out of this concern came the programs of child welfare of the early part of the century, and out of these programs developed the Children's Bureau in Washington. Twenty years ago, however, we came to appreciate the fact that little could be done with the child without the intelligent and directed cooperation of the parent. This led to the movement of parent education, which organized study circles in communities across the country. Parent education is as a result an accepted part of every community program. Today we see that, not the child and not the parent, nor even both together, but the family, is the unit of study and the unit of treatment. The family therefore must become the focus of social interest and social action.

A third change in emphasis, most important in its implications, is found in our social thinking. During the whole of the nineteenth century we stressed the development and emancipation of the individual. Individualism was the dominant note in our social philosophy. In all our political, economic, and religious enterprises we

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devoted ourselves to the establishment of the rights of individuals, to the protection of individuals from wrongs, to the responsibilities of the individual as a citizen of the State, to the translation, in other words, of the Bill of Rights into a program of civil liberties. With the advent of the twentieth century we began to speak not of the individual but of society, of social organization, and especially of social maladjustment. We were especially disturbed over social conditions that caused social distress, that accounted for sickness, unemployment, delinquency, and poverty. Both the individual and society, we recognize today, are important. But in emphasizing first the one and then the other we seemed to have forgotten the family. The family, we at last understand, is the social organization into which the individual is born and the social institution out of which the children of the world of tomorrow must come. The family is not only basic to the social order; it is central to all social development.

### THE CRISIS IN THE FAMILY

The family, which today is coming rapidly into the foreground of social study and concern, is passing through a period of crisis. This every student of social institutions knows and appreciates; but not all of us are sufficiently aware of the fact that the crisis through which the family is passing is just as serious as the crisis in religion, in cultural relations, in the economic system, and in the political order. One symptom of this crisis is the growing rebellion of youth against the authority of the parents. We know from the history of the family and human relations that there is always a certain distance both in thought and conduct between the older and the younger generation. Even in the most static periods of family life the dynamic spirit of youth has expressed

itself and fashioned its own and newer forms of life. But today the differences between parents and children are far greater, the disagreements are far more acute, and the dissensions are far more distressing than they have been for many generations. The conflicts, in truth, become so grave in most sections of society that we are compelled to conclude that they represent not conflicts between individuals but clashes between different conceptions of family organization and family relationships; in other words, that they possess not personal but historical significance.

Another symptom is the widening revolt of women against the husband's station in marriage and in the management of family affairs. This is undoubtedly one phase of the larger social movement that has been advancing for over a century, namely, the emancipation of women. For more than one hundred years women have been endeavoring to achieve equality in law, in political privileges, in economic opportunities and compensation. Through the Married Women's Property Act they have ended the old fiction that in marriage the husband and wife are one, and that one is the husband. Through an amendment to the Constitution they have succeeded in acquiring the right to vote on equal terms with men. Through the Industrial Revolution and especially as a result of national needs in war periods women have come to enjoy opportunities in almost every occupation and in many are receiving equal pay with men. But never before have women insisted with such emphasis upon their right to freedom in relation to family life. They have often complained bitterly because of household hardships and drudgeries; they have often protested against the petty tyrannies and inexcusable oppressions of the husband and father. For the first time women are now loosening the bonds of family responsibility. Their



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escape from the home and their flight into areas of occupation are to them evidence of their independence.

In addition to the rebellion of children and the revolt of women we also discover as a further symptom the restlessness of men. This is not often discussed, but it is becoming increasingly real. It may be nothing more than an expression and one aspect of the restless spirit of the age. The air is filled with discontent, an uneasy sense of the inadequacy of old customs and conventions, standards and ways of life, and an eagerness to explore new areas and outlooks. Or the restlessness that men feel may be an evidence of the spirit of adventure innate in the heart of every man. Men have never become so thoroughly domesticated as women. There still reside within them the subconscious desire for the hunt, the seeking after new horizons, and the lust for new conquests. Whatever the cause, there is undoubtedly a deepening feeling of resentment among men against what they regard as the routine and regimentation of family life. Urban civilization has imposed upon them the limited cycle of home, office, and home. Within this cycle they are compelled to live and move and have their being. The walls of the home become to them the walls of a prison, and the circle of the family the boundaries that circumscribe their liberty and rob them of their freedom. In various ways men are endeavoring to satisfy themselves through vicarious experiences, but they are seldom able to compensate themselves for the losses they feel they suffer as a result of the limitations that family life imposes upon them.

More serious than these symptoms of the crisis in family life, however, is the accumulating evidence concerning the increase in estrangements, separations, desertions, and divorces. It is difficult even to estimate the number of estrangements that do not end in separa-

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tions and to calculate the number of separations and desertions that do not end in divorce. We do know with approximate accuracy, however, the number of divorces that occur in the United States, and we are able to establish the incredible increase in the divorce rate. In 1867, the first year for which we have accurate statistics, about 10,000 divorces were granted in this country; 42,000 in 1896; 72,000 in 1906; 112,000 in 1916; a little more than 201,000 in 1929, at the very crest of prosperity. During the first years of the economic collapse the number of divorces decreased somewhat, but in the later years the trend again turned upward and in 1937 rose to over 250,000. It is estimated that in 1943 more than 300,000 divorces were granted in the courts of the United States. A study made by one of the ablest social statisticians proves that even before the war out of every nine marriages existing in the United States seven would be dissolved by death and two would be disrupted by divorce. The most startling fact lies in these figures: Since 1870 the population of the United States has increased 300 per cent; marriages have increased 400 per cent; and during the same period divorces have increased 2,000 per cent.

Prof. William F. Ogburn of the University of Chicago has stated that at the present time one divorce is granted in the United States to every five or six marriages performed. This means that about 20 per cent or one-fifth of the more than thirty million families in the United States are in danger not only of discord but of dissolution. A most tragic fact that a study of these statistics discloses is that 36 per cent of the divorces are granted during the first four years of marriage and that 66 per cent are granted during the first nine years of marriage. In other words, the first ten years of married life must be described as a decade of danger and extreme hazard. If

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the people of this country were informed that 20 per cent of the families were in danger of disease or an epidemic or a plague, of typhoid fever or smallpox or syphilis, they would be aroused to a realization of the threatened disaster and would insist upon the immediate formulation of a program of cure and prevention. Students of social trends and social statistics know that these statistics on divorce will grow worse and not better during the next five years. The last war was followed by a sudden increase in the divorce rate, and there is every reason to assume that this war will be followed by an aftermath of even more serious significance. For besides the forces at work at the close of the last war new and ominous forces have already begun to appear and to influence the conduct of men and women.

These statistics on divorce, startling as they must be to most men and women, give only a partial picture of conditions. To the number of divorces must be added the number of separations, legal and voluntary; the number of desertions that take place from year to year; the number of estrangements in which husband and wife are actually alienated from each other but continue to live in the same house because of their children or social pressure. For these cases of separations and desertions and estrangements that do not end in divorce there are no accurate records or statistics. But the experiences of ministers, doctors, lawyers, judges, and social workers indicate that the number is exceedingly large and increasing from decade to decade. There is less reluctance on the part of both men and women to leave their home and children and to dwell apart from their family. This means that the bonds of family life and the vows of marriage are less binding today than they have been in the past. It is also evident that men and women often resign themselves to living under the same roof without associ-

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ating with each other as husband and wife solely because they feel less compunction today in contracting extra-matrimonial alliances. It is impossible to determine even approximately the percentage of families in which estrangement of this character has taken place, but from the number of couples who confess in consultation that they have not lived with each other for months or years it is clear that the percentage is larger than even students of family life are accustomed to acknowledge.

To complete the picture, dismal and dark at many points, it is necessary now to add the large number of families in which disintegration is developing during the war period. In many families the father is away from home except for week ends or furloughs. In many other families the mother is out of the home, working in war plants during the day and sometimes on the night shift; in many families the children over sixteen are working for wages that even adults could not earn two or three years ago, and the children under sixteen are often engaged in part-time work that keeps them out of the home until late at night. These conditions not only result in neglect of little children; they result also in the neglect of mothers and fathers and children of each other. The members of the family today are much less concerned about each other's welfare than they have been for generations past. In other words, the family unit is breaking up into fragments; and this disorganization of the family is taking place not only in towns that are the center of war industries but in all communities across the country. Instead of the centripetal force that draws all members of the family to the center, the family now is suffering from centrifugal forces that drive each member of the family away from the center. The seriousness of this situation is evident when we realize that the family is the basic social unit and that if the organization of

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the family is threatened, the whole social structure is in danger.

### CAUSES OF DISORGANIZATION

The crisis through which the family is now passing is due not to one but to several causes. In the first place, the family is passing through a critical period because of the fundamental changes that are taking place within the framework of the family itself. The crumbling of the old foundations, the power of the parent, the sacrament of religion, and even the contract of the State, and the laying of new foundations derived from the field of science, that is, biology, psychology, and economics, constitute a change of historical importance. The reduction in the size of the family and the conscious and deliberate limitation and spacing of children are also a change of great significance, as great perhaps as the change from polygamy to monogamy. The disintegration of the patriarchal form of organization and the emergence of the democratic type now taking shape are attended by adjustments even more difficult to make than the change from the matriarchal to the patriarchal period. The shifting in emphasis from the biological and the economic to the emotional and ethical function of the family is so profound as to mark a new stage in the role of family development. All these changes taking place in the function, the organization, the structure, and the foundations of the family must inevitably lead to strain and conflict. These conflicts may seem to be on the surface nothing more than disagreements between individuals, between husband and wife, or between parent and child. In the light of the history of the family, however, they take upon themselves the character of conflicts between old and new social concepts, old and new cultural attitudes and outlooks. This is what complicates

and intensifies the problems and makes the family today not a center of personal quarrels and petty antagonisms but actually an arena of contending historical forces.

In the second place, the family is in danger because traditional social constraints are relaxing and outgrown social pressures are dissolving. For generations the family as an institution was surrounded and sustained by a network of customs, conventions, standards, and laws. This network is now rent at many points as a result of the eruption of new social attitudes and programs. The emancipation of women, the acceptance of divorce as a solution of marital distress, the distrust of the double standard of morality, the growing cult of the pseudo-celibate life for both men and women—these and other social attitudes have ruptured and in large part destroyed the protecting network of the past. The family, however, has not yet developed that inward strength that is necessary when outward control is relaxed and removed. This strength can come only from experience, understanding, and discipline. It is no wonder that many families stumble in their bewilderment, for many families like many individuals are able to maintain themselves in a normal state as long as they live in an environment that sustains them. But they disintegrate and collapse when this environment dissolves and disappears. It is easy to understand why families lose their sense of direction when we remember not only that the family is reft of the protecting environment that the past provided but that it discovers itself uninstructed and unguarded in a world that is infinitely more complicated and difficult than the world of our parents and grandparents. The simple patterns of the past have been shattered, and the family is utterly confounded in the presence of a social order that itself is in a state of cultural, economic, and political confusion.

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In the third place, the family is threatened because of the impact and shock of current social changes and cataclysms. There is space at present to discuss only some of the conditions in the field of economic life. Studies have been made of the family and the depression, but no one has been able to determine the extent of the damage that the family in the United States suffered as the result of ten years of widespread unemployment. Those who are in daily and immediate contact with families in distress do not find it difficult to visualize the demoralization that took place. Ten million men and women out of work whole time; four million families dependent upon public aid, local, state, or Federal; twenty-two and a half million men and women and children living in a state of destitution—all this meant not only the loss of wages and working skill but also the loss of confidence in self, interest in life, and hope in the future. It meant a corroding spirit of discouragement, resentment, and despair. Another economic condition that endangered the family was low income. The testimony presented not only to Congress but also to the country by Dr. Isador Lubin, Commissioner of Labor Statistics, in December, 1938, revealed that 87 per cent of the families in the United States had an annual income of less than \$2,500 and that 54 per cent of the families had an income of less than \$1,250. Sixteen million families were living on less than was necessary to maintain them on a decent and self-respecting level of life. It would be sad enough if one-third of the nation were ill fed, ill clothed, and ill housed. It is doubly sad and doubly distressing to learn that 54 per cent or sixteen million of the families in America were living below a normal level of life.

The cataclysm of war, it is now well established, always results in the disorganization of family life. War and war programs always speed up some social processes

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and always speed down others. Industry, invention, science are speeded up in wartime, and so are employment, income, and marriages. Standards of living, moral codes, and ethical ideals are speeded down, and so are the dissension in family relationships and the disintegration in family integrity. The very atmosphere in which men and women live in wartime is charged with excitement and anxiety and a deeply disturbing sense of insecurity. The radio, the newspapers, the magazines, the motion pictures, and the stage all contribute to the development of an emotional state that constantly borders on hysteria. One mother expressed it forcibly: "If another person tells me to keep calm, I'll scream." As a result of the atmosphere that men and women breathe, the propaganda that plays upon them relentlessly day and night, they are all in a hypersensitive state, every nerve is tense and taut, and they jump at every touch or sound or approach. They are unable to see things in their proper perspective or proportion; they exaggerate the meaning of the unimportant, and they miss the importance of things that are really significant.

In families in which separations occur conditions become exceedingly serious. Sometimes these separations are due to the drafting of a son or father; sometimes to the absence of wage earners in other communities; sometimes to the enforced employment of the mother; sometimes to the misguided zeal of women who engage in enterprises that compel them to leave their homes and to neglect their families in the name of patriotism. The increase in juvenile delinquency during every war can be traced in large part to the absence of fathers and mothers and to the lack of adequate guidance and guardianship. This is true of families that remain in their own communities. And it is doubly and trebly true of families that move into other communities that are expanding



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centers of wartime activities, munition plants, and armament factories. In these communities housing conditions are bad; not only are families herded into rooms that are uninhabitable, but some are attempting to live in trailers in the open fields. Health conditions are dangerous; the water supply, the sewerage system, the medical facilities are utterly insufficient to take care of this sudden increase in population. The schools, overcrowded even in peace-time, are utterly unable to accommodate new groups of children in wartime. It is utterly impossible for parents to maintain the normal routine of family life. No child can escape altogether untouched the effect of blackouts, air raids, and war excitements.

The consequence of all this is not only disorganization of normal family life, a lowering of resistance, an increase in disease; it is a dissolution of the standards that men and women have endeavored to build up in a civilized society. They now meet each other in a spirit of irritation and impatience; they speak to each other with unaccustomed sharpness and even anger. They act toward each other as if they were all aliens or enemies. Their thoughts are now focused not upon the family and the home but upon objects at a distance and upon events that have no immediate relation to the family itself. They have no time to cultivate family relationships, no time to concern themselves with family life and home affairs. In almost every family this process of disintegration is taking place, even in those families in which the closest and richest relationships have been established. Families can dispense with luxuries; they can even do without many conveniences; they can deprive themselves for a time even of so-called necessities; but if the family is to maintain itself as a family unit, it must have a home in which to live, nourishing food to eat,

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proper clothing to wear, and adequate facilities for health and education and recreation. Yet far more important than these physical facilities, the family must have time and will and desire to cultivate interest in each other and the spirit of comradeship that are the essence of family organization in our time.

### CHANGING FORMS OF THE FAMILY

Out of these conditions, this social crisis, and the cataclysm of international conflict new forms of family life will undoubtedly emerge. For the family is too deeply imbedded in the social structure ever to be rooted out. In spite of many discouragements and attempts to discredit the family even by such social thinkers as Plato and the lesser thinkers of our own time, the family has survived every social change and has outlived the dissolution of one social system after another, cultural, economic, political, and religious. The shape that these new forms of the family will take will depend in some measure upon our social concern and the conscious direction that men and women in a position of leadership will give to current trends. The family has its own laws, which must be studied and understood in the light of the origin, composition, and development of family life throughout the ages. When we come to understand the laws of the family, we shall be able to meet more wisely the changes that are taking place, and we shall realize that the content and the character of the family determine to a large degree the very social organization that we create. There is no doubt that the old foundations upon which the family has heretofore rested are crumbling and that new foundations are being laid. These new foundations it is necessary for all men and women interested in the advancement of the family to consider seriously and to establish firmly.

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The first foundation is the *biological*. That men and women are awakening to the serious significance of the biological foundation of marriage and family life is evident from the laws that are now being passed by the states in rapid succession, not only laws that require a pre-marital health examination of the couple but also laws that demand an examination of pregnant women to determine the presence or absence of syphilis in a communicable stage. Twenty states now require an examination by a physician and a blood test of both the bride and the bridegroom. Four states require an examination of only the groom to determine freedom from venereal disease. Seven states prohibit the marriage of persons with a venereal disease but do not require an examination. Eighteen states require a pre-natal examination of every pregnant woman in order to protect babies from syphilitic infection. One state, the state of Oregon, has succeeded in passing a law, not through the legislature but through the referendum, that requires an examination for the presence of insanity, feeble-mindedness, and epilepsy. These laws have been passed largely as the result of the national crusade against syphilis, but they form a part of a wider movement to improve family health. There is only one way in which men and women can protect themselves in marriage and safeguard their children, and that is through a complete examination by a competent physician. A medical examination will not uncover every condition that will interfere with marriage, but it will prevent much of the misery that now mars married life.

The next foundation is the *economic*. It is obvious and even axiomatic that a family cannot maintain a normal level of life on a subnormal income. And yet these are the facts. A report recently issued by the National Resources Committee reveals that, in 1935 and 1936,

14 per cent or 4,200,000 families in the United States had an income of less than \$500 a year; 42 per cent or 12,600,000 families had an income of less than \$1,000 a year; 79 per cent or 23,700,000 families had an income of less than \$2,000 a year. One and one-half to two million young men and women did not marry during the decade of the depression because of economic uncertainty. Unemployment, low income, and economic insecurity mean not only loss of wages and working skill but also loss of confidence in one's ability, loss of interest in life, and loss of hope in the future. They mean a low standard of living, and a low standard of living means low resistance, and low resistance leaves the family open to a multitude of ills, mental and moral as well as physical. It is difficult for those who are not in daily contact with families in distress to visualize the demoralization that has taken place in family life during the last decade. The important fact to keep in mind is this: A hundred years ago families could maintain themselves decently out of their own resources. Today families are dependent for economic security upon society, that is, upon conditions outside their own control. Unless society through government assures each family an adequate annual income, families cannot provide themselves with the food, the shelter, the clothing, the medical care, and the other necessities that enter into a normal budget. The economic foundation of family life cannot otherwise be made secure.

The third foundation is the *psychological*. Marriage unites not two persons but two personalities; the family is composed not of four or five persons but of four or five personalities. Psychologists are not agreed upon the content of this term. But we do know that "personality" includes certain psychological elements such as temperament, interests, ambitions, aspirations, dreams—all the

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psychological elements that make us so largely what we are. The role that these factors play in marriage and family life is being stressed more and more in studies coming from the social laboratories. The records reveal that many disturbances and much dissonance in family circles can be traced back to radical differences in temperament or to easily discovered immaturities and defects in the psychical constitution. If there are to be harmony in marriage and happiness in family life, there must be compatibility of temperament and community of interest. The circles of life of the different individuals must do more than touch at the circumference; they must intercept. The greater the degree of interception the broader the base on which comradeship can be built, and comradeship is one of the essentials of modern marriage and family life. In some instances the circles not only intercept; they coincide, as in the life of Madame Curie and her husband and children. Out of this comradeship came one of the great achievements of science, one of the miracles of medicine. In rare instances the circles not only coincide but coalesce, as in the life of Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning. Here are two great personalities, two great spiritual natures, two great poets, meeting in a union so complete and perfect that their married life becomes the classic symbol of supreme romance.

In addition to the biological, the economic, the psychological, there is also, and not less important, the *ethical* foundation. The highest law that husband and wife, parents and children must learn is to live with each other in a spirit of utter frankness and sincerity and truth. Just as soon as men and women begin to conceal from each other those things that each has a right to know, they at once build up barriers that shut them out from each other's life. Just as soon as husband and wife or parents

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and children begin to deceive each other, even in little things, they seriously damage the relationship that should unite and enfold the membership of the family. Men and women should learn even before they marry whether they understand each other, whether they speak the same language, whether they believe in the same standards of conduct, whether they share the same ideals, whether they can or cannot confide fully and freely in each other. Marriage means an intimacy of the mind and the spirit even more than of the flesh. Marriage rests upon morals as well as upon mores. It is for this reason that the deepest distress in marriage and family life comes not from biological defects or economic hardships or psychological differences but from a defiance of ethical principles and a betrayal of spiritual ideas. Marriage at its highest—and who would have it less than this?—is a spiritual relationship sanctioned by society and sanctified by religion.

While the foundations are changing, the structure and function and organization of the family are changing likewise. In the course of the ages the structure of the family has changed a number of times. These structural changes are too well known to students even to be named or enumerated. Today there is a growing agreement that the family should be composed of the following members: one husband, one wife, a limited number of children. One husband and one wife means no extramatrimonial alliances, no foreign entanglements. We realize now that the invasion of alien elements never fails to disturb the balance of the family and to poison the relationship of its members. A limited number of children, the conscious limitation of children, and the considered spacing of children are an acknowledged procedure in American family life. We have come to see that the number of children must depend not upon the ancient command,

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"Be fruitful and multiply," but upon the health of the parents, especially the mother, upon the ability of parents to rear children properly, and upon the social needs of the time. We have also come to understand that the limitation and spacing of children do not lead to race suicide or to a desecration of marriage or to a violation of the divine law. The sanctity of marriage does not depend upon conception or upon contraception but upon the spirit of consecration with which the man and woman enter the marriage bond. The lower down we go in the scale of life the less restriction there is upon the reproductive process; the higher we rise the more restraint and control. In other words, through contraception we are merely giving sight and intelligence to what in nature is a blind and groping impulse.

The change in the function of the family is just as fundamental as the change in the structure. For some time we have stressed the biological and the economic function of the family. Now we are emphasizing the psychological and the social. This change, necessary to meet modern needs, also leads to strain and contention. We are coming to see, however, that there is no adequate substitute for the family in cultivating the personality of its individual members. The family more than any other institution satisfies the desires, the cravings, the yearnings, the emotional and spiritual needs that are a natural and legitimate part of every normal human being. With all its weakness and imperfections the family develops a more rounded and a richer personality than any other social organization. The family is also one of the chief agencies of social progress, the agency through which the achievements of the past are conserved, the treasures of the present increased, and the endowments of the future transmitted. This function the family can fulfill only through the children. It is through our

children that we can enrich and vitalize the blood stream of our social life. The highest function the family can perform today is to educate and train and discipline young men and women who themselves will constitute the new social order. The family is related to the past by tradition; it is related to the future through social responsibility and social trust. In this sense the family is a covenant with posterity, the cradle into which the future is born, the nursery in which the new social state is being fashioned.

The change in the organization of the family is even more radical than the change in structure and function. It is evident that both the matriarchal and the patriarchal forms of family organization are disappearing. Autocracy in family life in America is doomed. A new form of organization that we call the democratic is emerging and taking shape. This change also leads to discord and to dissension. It is not easy for us to emancipate ourselves from the tradition of autocracy or to overcome the desire to dictate that seems to be a part of the mental and emotional make-up of most men and many women. The democratic type of family organization means discussion of all important problems, the recognition of the rights of each individual, the assumption of responsibility in accordance with the power and capacity of each person, the sharing not only of what we outwardly have but of what we inwardly are. All that is implicit in the democratic process. In the achievement of the democratic type of family life there is special significance today. An autocratic family organization can never prepare men and women and children for a democratic society. If we fail to develop a democratic family life, if we do not succeed in banishing from the family circle pompous dictators and petty tyrannies, we shall never truly cultivate within ourselves the demo-



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cratic spirit and equip ourselves and our children to share in democratic procedure and programs. To say that family life in America today is democratic is to be as naïve as to insist that our educational institutions, especially our colleges and universities, have been democratized.

### THE FAMILY AND DEMOCRACY

The democratic form of family organization means not the unwilling submission of any one member to the judgment of the majority but the conscious and considered surrender of each member to a program of life that is larger than all. Dictatorship in family affairs would be just as dangerous as dictatorship in the economic system or in the political order. It would be a menace to every freedom, the freedom to act in accordance with one's own conscience, the freedom to develop one's own life under the guidance of principles that he holds highest. This would mean a contraction of life, a circumscription of the range of activities, a paralysis of speech, and the death of all creative thinking. The democratic form of the family, on the other hand, cultivates every freedom that we have cherished; it does not merely provide space for growth; it consciously and deliberately promotes the development of individual capacities, peculiar powers, the uniqueness of each personality. When we democratize the family, we stimulate discussion, encourage common counsel, and gladly acknowledge and accept joint responsibility. It is only through the democratic development of the family spirit, it is only through the sharing of responsibilities, through constant consultation, through interested and active cooperation that we learn to share in the hazards and in the hardships as well as in the happiness and in the hopes of family life. To learn to bear the burdens as well

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as to enjoy the blessings, this is democracy translated into family programs and family practice, and the fruit thereof is not lesser but larger opportunities for development and satisfying fulfillment.

Democracy in family organization means that each member of the family shall have a voice in the solution of family problems and in determining family development. This is clear in principle but difficult to work out in practice. It is not easy, for example, for men to adjust themselves to their new status, to renounce their traditional claims as lord and master in the household. Sometimes this new status results in surprising and utterly unexpected decisions. In one educated and cultured family the wife startled her husband one day when she said to him, "Do you not think the time has come to reorganize our family life somewhat?" "Why, what is the matter with our family life? I thought you and I and our two daughters were getting along very happily together." "Yes, that is true, but you do not seem to realize that you really have been in control of family affairs and family funds, and we think that we should now have some part in the way the funds are spent and in the solution of our family problems." "Very well, suppose we try it. What do you think we should do?" "I think that the four of us should discuss all important matters that arise and then take a vote, just as an experiment." So this family of four arranged to discuss all important matters in conference and to take a vote at the conclusion. To the surprise of the man, the vote usually ran three to one, and he was the one. The wife and daughters, of course, were willing to compromise at times, and in this way all discord was prevented. The experiment illustrated, at least, the way in which democracy operates in family life. The man in the family discovered that democracy means consulta-

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tion and that cooperation means first of all not planning *for* others but planning *with* others.

In the new order of the family women face different problems. One problem they phrase in this manner: "How can I persuade my husband to take a more active interest in the home and assume a greater share of responsibility for the education of our children?" It is true that some men spend much of their spare time in furnishing and fixing the home and that some men are vitally concerned about the development of their children. But most men are away from the home and their family from morning until night, and they are too tired on their return to do anything but rest and seek a little recreation. They soon come to leave the home and children to their wives and to content themselves with a word of advice or criticism now and then. The result of this arrangement is that women are coming more and more to manage the household and to supervise the education of their children. They are able to do this to a greater degree than heretofore, since many mechanical appliances relieve them of much drudgery in the home and give them leisure time in which to attend courses and conferences and to equip themselves for intelligent direction of family affairs. In fact, women are growing so competent in the field of home economics and child development that we may now be on the verge of a neo-matriarchal period. Many men sense this fact and secretly feel themselves at a disadvantage, and some even are in danger of developing an inferiority complex as a result of the wife's superior preparation and powers. The only sensible solution of this problem is a reeducation of men and a reallocation of their time. One man who recognized the mistake he had made and the degree to which he had failed as husband and father confessed frankly what many men understand more or less clearly:

“Had I given to the building up of my marriage and family life one-half the time that I have given to the building up of my business, I should not be nearly so wealthy, but I should be less unhappy in my home.”

Children present an even more difficult problem, both to their parents and to themselves. How can children assume a responsible role in the democratic organization and development of the family when they are so untrained, inexperienced, immature? They cannot know the meaning of common counsel, cooperation, and joint responsibility. All of this is true, especially in the early years of childhood. That is the time for control and direction. But as children grow older, it is important that they be introduced as rapidly as possible into the affairs of the family; from year to year they should be charged with greater and greater responsibility. The very fact that children are immature, inexperienced, and untrained not only offers us the opportunity but imposes upon us the obligation of training our children in the ways of democratic action and of extending their experience in democratic procedures and of assisting them to maturity as citizens of a democratic state. Fulfillment of the obligation requires time and patience and also competence, and unless we are willing and able to undertake this social task, this service to society, both we and our children will suffer retardation and maladjustment. We must learn how to lead our children from stage to stage in the democratic way of life if we wish to save them from becoming either petty and insolent little tyrants or subservient and mechanical little automatons. The truth is that children want to be taken into the family circle. They not only welcome confidence and responsibility but rightly resent any attempt to exclude them. Children naturally are unhappy when we attempt to ignore them, especially in matters that concern their

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own wishes and their own welfare, their clothes, their schooling, their associates, their amusements. Perhaps if we were to consult our children more often, we might occasionally be surprised to discover how much they know and how wise they are, how much wisdom comes out of the unspoiled mind and the innocent heart of the child.

In wartime, especially in the time of a total war, it is necessary for the country to reorganize itself, to convert its industrial plants into war-production units, to readjust its agricultural, commercial, and financial systems to war ends, in other words, to establish itself as a war economy. This change in social structure, organization, and function necessarily affects every institution, political, economic, cultural, and certainly the family. No nation can militarize itself without at the same time modifying more or less profoundly every part, every factor, every element in the national life. How deeply and how permanently the family in America will be changed as a result of our war economy it is difficult to determine at this stage. In the dictator countries the family is remolded in the image of the State. The function of the family is to serve the State, the organization of the family is modeled after the State, and the structure of the family, particularly the number of children, is dictated by the State. This is inevitable in a nation believing in the supremacy of the State and believing that the individual and the family exist only to serve the State. The United States, however, is a democracy, and the people of America are engaged in a world-wide defense of democratic principles, democratic processes, and democratic practices. The primary place in which to preserve these practices and processes and principles is the family, which is not only the threshold of democracy but the matrix in which the embryonic demo-

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cratic order is conceived and nourished. If we recognize this fact—and no fact is more important for the future—then we shall do our utmost to safeguard the family against the disorganization and the disintegration that menace it in wartime. The battle for democracy must be fought on the land, on the sea, and in the air. But we shall lose the war unless we save democracy in the families and in the homes of America.

### A PROGRAM

One way in which to preserve and safeguard the family is to formulate a program of education, of service, and of legislation. This program must do at least these things. It must make men and women acquainted with the age-long experience of the race, that is, with the laws, the standards, the ideals that have developed out of the experience of the various racial, religious, and national groups in the matter of marriage and family life. It must instruct men and women in accordance with the studies now being made in the social science laboratories, studies that reveal not only the weaknesses of old foundations but the content and the character of the new foundations on which the family must rest hereafter. It must also assure men and women counsel and guidance by experts who because of their training, experience, and personality are competent to serve as counselors both before and after marriage. In order that men and women may be adequately equipped to cope with the problems of family life in our time, it is necessary for them to understand the change in emphasis, the meaning of the crisis, the causes of disorganization, the new forms developing within the family, and the relation of the family to democratic procedures and democratic practices. In addition, it is necessary that they be aided through a counseling service and that they be protected by a liberal and progressive code of Domestic Relations Law.

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An adequate educational program in any agency or institution, private, religious, or governmental, would include series of lectures, study groups, institutes, and full courses on marriage and the family. The series of lectures would be designed to bring to men and women the best thoughts upon the following topics: the old foundations of marriage; the new foundations of marriage; the changing structure, organization, and function of the family; the major causes of discord and conflict in family life today; the developing technique of establishing right relationships between husband and wife; methods of meeting maladjustments between parents and children; the scientific interpretation of current and acute problems such as eugenics, intermarriage, and divorce. Experience in many institutions and communities has proved that the best plan is to arrange for a series of four or five lectures, to be given once a week in the evening when both men and women can attend. These lectures should be delivered by physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, lawyers, judges, home economists, social scientists, and ministers. But the lecturers should be selected not only because of their special training and experience but also because of their ability to present and to interpret material in a scientific and stimulating and effective manner.

The study group, which often develops out of a lecture series, should be composed of a limited number of couples, not more than fifteen, married or about to be married. The study group is designed primarily to meet the needs of men and women who are eager to explore carefully under expert leadership the problems that arise in their own marriage and family relationships. In some institutions and communities the study group may take the form of a round-table discussion; in others the seminar method may be employed. Only those, however, who have the time and the interest and the ability to study

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the material that is assigned for discussion at each session should be allowed to enroll in the study group. In order to succeed it is necessary to select the topics in which the members of the group are interested, to arrange a syllabus that will cover the topics carefully, to select the textbooks to be used and the collateral readings to be recommended. Yet more important than the syllabus and the textbooks and the readings is the leader of the group. The leader must be a man or woman who is an authority on the subject, who is accustomed to group discussion, and who understands the principles of adult education. Most of all, the leader must be quick to sense the problems that disturb the members of the group and must know how to develop these problems into case studies. The case-work method, in fact, is the best method in this field.

Institutes on marriage and the family may be arranged to last for one or two or three days with sessions in the morning, the afternoon, and evening. These institutes, which have proved of great value in many communities, may be organized by a community agency, church, synagogue, school, or settlement; or they may be organized by one community agency in cooperation with other agencies including community centers, welfare organizations, and libraries. The institutes should be in all cases sponsored by a group of representatives that will bring together all the agencies in the community that are concerned with the advancement of marriage and family life. These agencies are found in the fields of health, education, welfare, recreation, and religion, and in addition it is possible to draw upon men's and women's clubs and fraternal organizations. Thus the institute becomes a community project with community support and will lead to community interest and a community program. It is important, however, that the sponsors



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invited be men and women who are well known and who speak with authority. Audiences today become impatient with amateur discussions of problems that require expert understanding and exposition. Every session of the institute should have a question-and-answer period. Some members of the audience may feel free to ask questions from the floor, but in matters so intimate as marriage and the family most members will wish to write out their questions and to have them answered from the platform. In the institutes even more than in the lecture series and round-table discussions it is urgent that some session be devoted to the problems of youth as they are related to marriage and family life.

Full courses on marriage and the family are now being given as a regular part of the curriculum in many colleges and universities. But it must be remembered that colleges and universities reach only a limited group of the community and that only a limited section of the college community is able to take these courses. It is necessary, therefore, that other agencies in the community such as churches, synagogues, and community centers which draw upon other community groups also arrange courses on marriage and family life. These courses, it is unnecessary to state again, must be conducted by men and women who are thoroughly trained in their subjects and are recognized teachers and counselors. If the community contains within its boundaries a college or university or is located within a reasonable range of such an institution, it is not difficult to draw upon the college or university staff for leadership. Otherwise, the leader of the course must be invited to come from a more distant center. The full course should be based upon an accepted college textbook and should extend over a regular semester period of at least thirty hours. The topics to be studied should include the follow-

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ing: the history of the family; the structure of the family; the organization of the family; the function of the family; current problems; the new techniques of marriage and family counseling; the findings of social scientists now working in the social science laboratories. In organizing a course it is necessary to adapt the material available to the educational and cultural stage of the members. One of the most fruitful fields in which to develop a program of this character is the educational department of the larger labor organizations.

In addition to a program of education there must be a program of service. The program of service, experience indicates, should include two projects closely interrelated, namely, the pre-marital conference and family counseling. The pre-marital conference is designed to answer the questions in the minds of young men and women who are about to be married, and it arranges for a discussion of the problems that vex them. But the purpose of the pre-marital conference is larger than these questions and problems. Its purpose is to acquaint young men and women with the different aspects of marriage and to instruct them in the new foundations upon which marriage today must rest. It is necessary, therefore, to include within the scope of the pre-marital conference some discussion of the following topics: the legal implications of the marriage contract; the economic basis of marriage; the biological foundations; the psychological factors; the ethical, religious, and spiritual ideals. It is not probable that any one couple will be in need of a thorough and complete exposition of each topic. But a marriage counselor must be thoroughly familiar with the material and must be prepared to discuss every item included within each topic. This is the only way in which it is possible to equip young people with a full understanding of the meaning of marriage and to prepare

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them to cope with the problems that marriage always brings on the different levels of life.

Family counseling, an acknowledged and rapidly developing form of service, is a delicate, difficult, and highly specialized procedure. The first step is to assemble all the available evidence in the case; the second step is to discover the cause or causes of distress; the third step is to plan out a program of action. In other words, family counseling involves determining as accurately as possible the diagnosis in the case and developing as far as resources will permit a course of treatment. In order to engage in this program of service it is necessary to know the agencies that can be employed in treatment and then to develop an approach that will win confidence and cooperation. Men and women who seek counsel and guidance in the solution of their marital problems are as a rule disturbed, distressed, and bewildered. They need and seek, in counseling service, first a sympathetic attitude, second, an intelligent analysis of their trouble, and third, an expert and authoritative form of treatment. In order to meet their needs it is necessary for the counselor, whatever his or her background or the field out of which he or she comes, to have the training, the experience, the personality that not only will insure a thorough and competent exploration of each case but will encourage men and women to cooperate in the development of the plan of treatment that is formulated. This means that the counselor must be an expert social diagnostician and a master of social therapeutics as well.

The program of legislation, which supplements the program of education and the program of service, should concern itself with the Marriage Law, the Domestic Relations Law, of which the Marriage Law is a part, and the Divorce Law; it should also deal with other measures and other laws designed to protect and preserve the

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family as a social institution. At the present time each state has its own Domestic Relations Law and its own Divorce Law. But not one law in the forty-eight states embodies what we now know to be necessary for the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family. The law in this field as in so many others lags far behind our knowledge and our experience and our common convictions. Not only are the laws themselves retarded and in some instances obsolete; their administration is utterly inadequate. In not one community in the country, for example, is the Marriage Law administered by men and women who have any training or experience or understanding of the problems of marriage and family life. They possess no competence whatever that will permit them to guide and counsel young men and women who apply for the marriage license. Even in the courts that have jurisdiction over marriage and family affairs the judges are often unacquainted with the findings of the social scientists in the matter of marriage and family relationships. A complete program of legislative reform would establish courts with full jurisdiction over marriage and family problems and would staff these courts with men and women who are especially trained to understand the problems of marriage and family life and to serve those who are in distress.

We now realize that no institution can serve as a substitute for the family. We may delegate to the school much of the formal education of children, adolescents, and adults; but the family remains the primary and potent instrument of education for children and their parents. No one can escape the educational influence of the home in the formation of habits, attitudes, and outlooks both during the early plastic years and during the later years of life. We may transfer to the church and the synagogue the formal ritual of religion; but the

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home continues to shape the religious life of men and women as well as children even more than religious institutions. Teachers of religion recognize this fact in the constant complaint that they cannot counteract in the synagogue and the church what children learn in the home through precept but chiefly by example. There is no institution, however, to which we can transfer or delegate the service the family renders in meeting the emotional and spiritual needs of the individual. There is no adequate substitute for the satisfactions that come through family associations, family experiences, family failures, and family achievements. With all its weaknesses and imperfections the family, we must admit, cultivates a more rounded and a richer personality than any other social institution.

The family, however, not only develops the individual but also makes a contribution to social life and to social progress that cannot be made by any other agency or organization. It is out of the family of today that the world of tomorrow must necessarily and inevitably come. Society is composed not of men and women who come out of the void but of men and women who are born into families and who come directly out of family environment and who are molded by family influence. Studies have been made repeatedly that show how even one unfit and defective family can spread its poison through a number of generations and over large geographic areas and place upon society unbearable burdens in the form of disease and insanity, delinquency and vice. Studies are also being made that reveal the contribution that sound and competent families make to society. From these families come forth men and women who extend the boundaries of human knowledge, deepen and expand the range of human experience, greaten and refine the heritage of the centuries.

## *Part I*

### The Pre-marital Conference

#### CHAPTER 2

#### INITIAL INTERVIEW

When two young people come to consult us, they have in every case certain questions that they want to ask and in many cases they have problems that they want to discuss. We must realize that these two young people have known each other for some time, even though it may be only a matter of weeks or months, and we must assume that they have discussed with each other the question of marriage and that they have also considered some of the problems that are involved in a marriage relationship. Even in the simplest associations and the happiest relationships questions arise and problems develop about which young men and young women are more or less concerned, and they often would like to explore these with someone who can give them guidance and encourage them with counsel. No matter what our own profession and our own conception of the content and purpose of marriage counseling, it is wisest to begin with the questions that are upon the lips of the young man and the young woman and with the problems that to them are urgent and troublesome. In fact, the best procedure is to open the conference with a courteous and considerate inquiry. "Is there any question that you would like to ask me?" Or "Is there any problem that you would like to discuss with me?" One

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question naturally leads to another, and the statement and consideration of the immediate problem soon lead to a discussion of marriage itself and of family life.

This caution it is necessary to keep always in mind. For if we come from the field of medicine, we shall probably want to speak first of the medical aspects of marriage; if we come from the field of psychology or psychiatry, we shall want to discuss the psychological factors in marriage; if we come from the field of home economics, we shall want to emphasize the importance of housekeeping and homemaking; if we come from the field of law and are legally trained, we shall want to stress the legal implications of the marriage contract; if we come from the field of religion and the ministry, we shall probably want to impress upon them the sacredness of marriage and the sanctity of family life; if we have become members of the new profession of marriage and family counselors, we shall want to discuss with the young people all the aspects of marriage and the specific problems that we discover in the course of our interview. But we must postpone our own special interests until the proper time. Unless we do this, the young man and the young woman are likely to grow impatient and to say to themselves, "When will we have a chance to discuss the things that concern us most?" Not until we have answered the questions they want to ask, not until we have discussed with them the problems that they think urgent, are they mentally prepared and emotionally ready to listen to our questions and to consider the material that we think important to include in a pre-marital conference. Nothing, in truth, will alienate young people more quickly than a "lecture" in advance on the subject of marriage.

The couple will probably want to inquire first of all about the marriage ceremony itself. Of what does the

ceremony consist? Where can the service be held and at what hour? What will the service cost? How long will it take? These are all simple questions and easily answered, but to the young people they are very important. They will be relieved to know that the ceremony will not take too long, that the cost will not be greater than they can afford, and they will be happy to find that the ceremony can be performed in the minister's study or the chapel of the church or wherever they would like to have it and that the day and hour can be fixed at the time they desire. What interests them more, however, are the order of the service and the arrangements that are necessary. Not infrequently we hear such comments as these: "We wish the minister had told us just what questions he was going to ask and at what point in the ceremony." "I wish the minister had told me when he was going to ask for the ring." "We would have understood the ceremony better if the minister had explained to us in advance the meaning of the different parts and the significance of the symbols." It is therefore always wise to outline to the young people the order of service and to rehearse the ceremony with them. This often saves moments of embarrassment both to them and to the person who performs the ceremony.

Sometimes the young people will begin with a legal question: "What must we do in order to secure a marriage license, and how long must we wait before we can be married?" In answer to this question we can show them the form that they must fill out and explain to them the items that the application for a marriage license contains. But in addition to this we can emphasize the reason for the interval that is required between the time of application for the license and the time when the ceremony may be performed. The law requires this interval in order to prevent hasty marriages. In those



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states in which an interval of five days must elapse between the time of application for a license and the time the marriage service may be performed about 15 per cent of the couples, we may state, do not return for the license. Hasty marriages are as a rule unwise. It is not the length of time that two people know each other that counts; it is their understanding of each other and each other's needs. At other times the young people may ask this question: "How old must we be in order to marry in this state?" This we can answer without difficulty, but the point is that the question gives us an opportunity to impress upon them the fact that the legal age for marriage is not nearly so significant as is maturity. Not all young people fully understand that marriage assumes a legal age and physical development, but, what is far more important, it demands also mental, emotional, and spiritual maturity. This word of caution and counsel is especially necessary in this age of adolescent marriages.

Instead of a question the young people may begin with a legal problem: "We were civilly married in the state of Maryland during the summer. Are we permitted to have a religious ceremony in the state of New York?" What they suspect is correct. The state of New York requires a blood test and does not permit the remarriage of a couple married in the state of Maryland that requires no blood test at the present time. Or they may present this problem: "We are first cousins. Is it true that we cannot marry in this state?" Their ignorance of the law and the misinformation they have received are a source of worry to them and a problem that needs to be solved. Or they may present a legal problem of a more serious character: "We have come to consult you because we are in doubt as to the validity of the marriage we are planning. I was divorced in the state of Florida;

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is there any impediment to my marriage in this state?" They may not be acquainted with the law itself, and they may be greatly disturbed over the conflicting reports that have come to them. Indeed, it is surprising how many problems of a legal nature arise to confuse and perplex young men and women. The more intelligent they are, the more fully they realize the importance of the problems, and it is only natural that they should want to be certain that their marriage will be legal and valid and unimpeachable. Until we have removed all their doubts in regard to the legality and validity of their marriage, they will not be ready to listen with interest to the counsel we have to offer on other problems. They will not, for example, be concerned with the terms and the meaning and the implications of the marriage contract of the state, nor will they wish to consider the difference between a civil ceremony and a religious service.

Other questions that lie near the surface in the minds of the young people may concern their economic life and their home. "How much do you think we need in order to marry?" In answering this question it is necessary to study the social level of the young people and to know something of their home background and of their own desires. In all cases we have at this point an opportunity to urge young men and women not to be too ambitious and not to be misled by what others do or even by what others desire for them. Another question may be the following: "Where can we find a model budget, one that is made out for people of our economic class?" This means that the young man and the young woman want to discuss their income together with their expenditures. They want to know probably what they should allow for rent, for food, for clothing, for other items, and it is necessary for the counselor to be pre-

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pared either to advise them or to refer them to some agency where they can secure the information that they request. A third question that they may want to ask is expressed in this manner: "We do not know much about housekeeping. Where can we learn how to keep our home efficiently?" This, of course, means that the counselor must know where courses in home economics can be taken and what the cost and hours of instruction would be. The question opens the way to a discussion of the central place of the home in family life and the service the home should offer young people as well as their friends.

In addition to these questions the young people may be wrestling with some economic problems the solution of which they are unable to find without assistance. "Do you think the wife should work?" The problem is not a simple one. The young people know that there is a general answer, but what they want to consider with us is the special problem that is their own. In these days and especially in times of economic uncertainty and insecurity they need to know the experience of others. This experience they can learn only from one who has had the opportunity of studying the married life of young people over a period of years. Another problem that young people may face not infrequently is implied in this question: "Do you think it wise for us to accept assistance from our relatives?" Many factors enter into this problem—the attitude of the young people themselves, the attitude of the relatives who are able to assist them, the manner in which the assistance is given, and the dangers that always lie in subsidies no matter how carefully concealed. In order to aid the young people to a solution of this problem it is necessary to study thoroughly all the elements that enter into it. The problem may also be one that involves their occupational life or the occupation par-

ticularly of the young man. The young man may say, "I am not at all satisfied with my present work. I think I could learn to do something that would offer me a larger income and assure me greater security. What do you think of my making a change at this time?" The counselor himself may not be an expert in vocational problems, and it would therefore be unwise to offer the young man guidance. But the counselor should be acquainted with individuals and agencies in the field to whom the young man can be commended and where he can secure the expert direction that will save him from inept and fruitless experiments.

It is not improbable that the young man or the young woman or both have questions concerning health or heredity or contraception. "We do not want to have children for at least two years. Would you tell us the best way in which to prevent conception? We understand that some methods are dangerous. Which method do you advise us to employ?" This is a subject that always comes into the foreground of discussion and about which the young people desire and certainly deserve counsel. If we do nothing more than refer them to one who is thoroughly competent to instruct them in a scientific manner, we are rendering a real and necessary service. Or they may have another question that is just as important: "We have read some pamphlets on the subject of sex hygiene, but we are not sure that we understand all that we have read. We have heard of so many mistakes and misunderstandings during the first months of marriage that we are somewhat concerned over our own dangers." More and more young people are coming to realize that they cannot leave their marital relationships to undirected impulses. They are learning that marriage is an art that must be patiently learned and thoughtfully cultivated. The very fact that they ask

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these questions means that they have come to understand that their love must be intelligent as well as emotional. This is a great advance over the attitude of previous generations and one that must be encouraged.

Instead of questions in this field of health and heredity they may have problems that are more or less serious and complicated. Men and women are becoming increasingly health-conscious, and many young couples now appreciate the menace of ill health and the dangers of physical and mental defects in married life. They appreciate the fact that it is not enough to read just a pamphlet or two and that examination and instruction are now necessary. "We really know very little about anatomy and physiology and disease. We should like to feel that we are protecting ourselves and whatever children may issue from our marriage. Could you refer us to some competent physician?" As a rule their fears are altogether unfounded, but to them the fears are real. Just to relieve young men and women of concern about their health is in itself a service, and this service we are under the necessity of rendering before we can proceed to discuss with them any other topic. Another problem may present itself in this manner: "My father died of tuberculosis. Do you think that I may have inherited the disease?" When they are told that tuberculosis is not inherited, they are exceedingly grateful for this information. But they should be warned, of course, that tuberculosis is transmissible and that every member of a family in which there is tuberculosis should be carefully examined. To disabuse their minds of misunderstandings in regard to heredity or to caution them in cases in which hereditary traits and defects may mar their marriage is in itself assistance in the solution of a problem. Many problems are solved in large part through explanation.

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The questions and problems may be not biological but psychological in character. "We have not had the same education. Do you think this makes much difference in marriage?" Young people who think of marriage in terms of comradeship are often concerned about the fact that one has no more than a high-school education and that the other is a college graduate. It is natural that they should think of the difference in educational advantages, and it is important to point out to them that the difference in education is of less significance than the difference in intellectual development and level of intelligence. They feel thankful to learn that if two people are within range of each other in intellect, it is not difficult to compensate for the differences in education. Another question that recurs constantly is this: "We do not like the same things. We do not seem to have many interests in common. Is it possible for us to cultivate common interests?" The natural question to ask them in turn is, "What do you two young people talk about when you are together?" If they state quite frankly that they find it difficult to discover things to discuss, that they spend most of their time in places of entertainment and pleasure or in company of other people, and that they are at a loss when they find themselves alone, then it is evident that something serious is wrong with their relationship. In order to discover just what is wrong it is frequently necessary to engage them in discussions and to watch their reactions both separately and in the presence of each other. Otherwise, it is exceedingly difficult to answer the question that is troubling them.

The problems in the psychological area of their life may be altogether too complicated for them to understand. "We have so many misunderstandings, we quarrel so often, that it seems to us there is something funda-

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mentally wrong with our relationship." Very often the misunderstandings and quarrels are due to differences in temperament, in psychical make-up, in social background, in the outlook upon life itself; or it may be that the misunderstandings and quarrels are due to the invasion of alien and extraneous influences the significance and intensity of which the young people may not realize. In order to discover what factors are at work and which are accountable for the discords of which they complain it is necessary to spend much time in analyzing the problem into its elements. Without being aware of the facts the young people may be the victims of their own immaturity. In other words, they may still be in the adolescent stage of their development and act with all the instability and irresponsibility and explosiveness of undisciplined adolescents. Or it may be true that the young woman is inferior to the young man in emotional and intellectual development and that they may not recognize this fact. Or it may be just the other way around: the young man may be inferior to the young woman. It happens again and again that two young people who differ greatly in their emotional and intellectual development are attracted to each other on a purely biological level. The inevitable result is that when the biological forces are quiescent, the differences on other levels lead to dissension.

The young people may be concerned with questions and struggling with problems that are neither legal nor economic nor biological nor psychological, but that may lie on the level of ethics and religion. "We are planning to be married this week. Do you think we should tell our parents?" This question may be expressed or it may, as often happens, be in the background of what they openly say. It does not come into the foreground until we ask them, "Your parents of course know that your marriage

is to take place?" To answer the question correctly is in itself a service they will not forget. For young people are not always aware of the fact that marriage is not a private affair and that they must consider their parents as well as themselves. Or the question they have may phrase itself in this way: "Do you think it is necessary for a young man and a young woman to reveal the past to each other?" There may be nothing in their past that cannot be revealed without danger to their marriage and their future. But the question does come to many young people, especially to those who are ethically well developed and morally sensitive. Until the question is answered in their own minds, they cannot feel at ease with each other. Or the question that they face may involve their religious attitudes. "We are not of the same faith. Do you think we should marry?" This question is not easily answered, but until we have discussed the arguments for and against intermarriage with them thoroughly, they are unready to discuss any other topic. Here, too, it is necessary to aid them to understand that their marriage concerns their families as well as themselves.

The problems upon the ethical and religious level may be much more serious than the implications of the questions. "Our parents do not approve of our marriage. Do you think we should marry without our parents' knowledge or consent?" This problem is not uncommon in counseling service. In order to assist young people to work out the solution it is necessary to study the case as a whole and not as it is presented by the young people. There are many reasons for which parents object to a marriage. Sometimes the reasons are good and the parents are right; sometimes the reasons are bad and the parents are wrong. In the cases in which the parents are wrong another question arises: Should the parents be informed of the marriage in advance in spite of the fact



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that they disapprove? These and many other elements of the problem must be carefully considered in counseling the young people. Another problem may be phrased in this way: "We are very fond of each other, but we are not passionately in love. Do you think our fondness will grow and deepen into what we ought to feel for each other as husband and wife?" So much is involved in this problem that it cannot be solved without the most thorough study of both the young man and the young woman and their relationship to each other. They may be restrained in the expression of their feelings by inhibitions that need to be removed; they may be so constituted that they are not capable of passionate emotions; or they may have misconceptions of the love relationship as a result of what they have seen in motion pictures or read in novels. These are only some of the elements that we may discover in analyzing the relationship and in endeavoring to solve the problem for the young people.

After their own questions have been answered and their own problems have been discussed, the most natural way to advance with the conference is to say, "Tell me what you have read on the subject of marriage and the family." Some will say that they have not read anything at all; a few will answer that they have read a pamphlet or two, probably upon the biological aspects of marriage or upon the narrower subject of sex hygiene; fewer still will state that they have read a book on marriage or even a book on the family. As a rule these pamphlets and books will prove to be a popular treatment not of marriage or the family but of marital association. After we have learned what information they possess, we can call their attention to the increasing literature that is being published on these subjects, that is, to magazines, to pamphlets, and to books. It is therefore necessary that we have assembled in our library

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material serviceable to them and that we show them the library we have organized in our own field. "This magazine, I think, you will enjoy, and I would urge you to subscribe for the monthly issues." "These pamphlets have been written by competent men and women, and you will find them not only informing but authoritative." "These books all deal with the subject of marriage and family life. You will find that they will give you a good understanding of the development of the family and of current problems." What we advise the young people to read depends, of course, upon their stage of education and intelligence and also upon the time they have available. It may be that they will be able to read little before their marriage, but after their marriage they should be encouraged to read what we commend to them.

The young couple will undoubtedly be surprised to learn that so much has been written and published on the subject of marriage and family life. "We had not the slightest notion," some will say, "that so much is being done in this field." This and similar comments give us the opportunity to discuss more fully the studies that are now being conducted in the social laboratories. "The social scientists are making marriage and the family a center of concern and one of the major topics of investigation. They are exploring the field very carefully, and they are now discovering the conditions that hinder marriage or that insure a permanent and happy comradeship." This presentation not only will convince them of the seriousness with which men and women are now studying the foundations of marriage and family relationships but will acquaint them with the scientific methods that are being developed. Many young people will be greatly interested in learning something of the groups that are working on these problems, something of the methods

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that are being employed, and the conclusions that are being reached. They undoubtedly will be interested in the questionnaires that have been prepared by the social scientists and even more in the score cards that have been devised. As a result they will probably come to realize that marriage and family counseling is now based upon scientific investigation and scientifically developed procedures, in other words, that marriage and family counseling is now conducted by a group of experts whose training and experience are as rigid as that of any other profession.

It is probable that they are altogether unaware of the number of men and women who are now majoring or specializing in the field of marriage and family counseling. They will learn no doubt for the first time that a new profession is coming into being and that some of the members of this new profession come out of the field of the ministry, some out of medicine, some out of psychiatry, some out of law, some out of home economics, and some out of the larger field of teaching. They will also learn perhaps for the first time of the number of consultation centers that are now being established in different communities, in churches and synagogues, in neighborhood centers, and in colleges. These consultation centers, they should be told, are staffed by men and women who are competent to serve both the unmarried and the married because of their special training, long experience, and personal equipment. This information that we give them they will no doubt communicate to others, and in this manner they will spread the knowledge of marriage and family counseling to wider and wider circles of the people. It is not improper for us at this point, it seems evident, to caution young people against those men and women who are untrained, inexperienced, and incompetent in this field. For there are individuals who are

exploiting the distress and suffering of men and women, pseudoauthorities or charlatans, who assume to speak with expertness, and who are now resorting to magazines and the radio for no other purpose than to advance themselves and to profit at the expense of the uninformed and the credulous.

It is imperative also to impress upon young people that marriage counseling as we now understand it does not begin and end with the marriage service. No advice could be more misleading and fallacious than the customary caution, "Remember that the first year is a year of adjustment." This is utterly untrue. It is not the first year but every year that is a year of adjustment. Men and women grow, and as they grow they change, and the result is that many questions and many problems arise during the years of married life and the unfolding of the family. "You must not think that we limit our service to the pre-marital conference. We are just as much interested in your post-marital life, and we should like you to come to see us from time to time and especially when difficulties appear upon the horizon of your marriage and family relationships." The temptation, of course, is for men and women to postpone action, and they often postpone and postpone again until it is too late. "You must realize that it is wise to consult experts as early as possible in seeking a solution of your problem. You do not wait until a disease becomes advanced before you consult a physician, not if you are intelligent and wise. Therefore you must not wait until your marital problems become acute or chronic. It is much easier to treat and to cure troubles when they are in the incipient stage." No admonition is more necessary than this, that men and women must not neglect the problems that arise in marriage and family life, not any more than they should neglect the symptoms of sickness.

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Another question that we may ask is this: "Have you ever taken any course on marriage and family life?" Some of the young people may have attended a lecture or a series of lectures, and a few of the college group may have taken a course on the family or on related subjects. But most of those who come to us have never taken a course of any kind in this field, nor have they even listened to a lecture by a competent student of the subject. It is therefore necessary for us to call their attention to the lectures and the round-table discussions and the courses that are now offered by churches and synagogues, community centers, and high schools and colleges. "Why would it not be well for you to attend some of these lectures? You will find that men and women today come together not to hear a sensational discussion of sex hygiene but to listen to a scientific treatment of the serious problems that arise in marriage and family life." We may also inform them of the courses that are given in many centers on the subject of housekeeping and homemaking, particularly for those who are about to marry and for young married couples. "Would it not be well for you to enroll in one of these courses in home economics? Home economics really means management of the home. You will be surprised to find to what degree these courses will assist you in keeping house." They will probably be grateful for this word of counsel.

This counsel naturally leads to a fuller discussion of the preparation that young people should have today for marriage and family life and that so many lack altogether or in large part. "You have spent much time no doubt in equipping yourself for your present occupation. You know that even the simplest vocations now require training and skill and that all the professions demand more complete preparation and a longer period of internship than ever before. You will want surely to

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spend some time in preparing yourself for your new vocation, the vocation of husbandhood and wifehood and possibly parenthood." More and more young men and women, we find, are coming to appreciate this fact and to realize that the lack of adequate training and instructed experience may become a source of many problems in their marriage relationships. It requires more than one brief interview to discover how much the young man and the young woman know and to outline to them what we believe to be necessary in each particular case. But unless we are prepared to give this time to them and unless we have the knowledge and the patience that are necessary to cover the subject thoroughly, it is impossible to engage them in a consideration of the topics included in marriage counseling. If it is impossible for the young people to complete their preparation before their marriage takes place, they can always arrange to do this after their honeymoon. The important thing is to help them realize the necessity for proper preparation and adequate equipment, in other words, the need for foundations on which they can safely and securely build their married life.

At this point in the course of the interview the young man and the young woman in almost every case will remark, "Why is it necessary for us to prepare ourselves for marriage and family life today? Our parents and our grandparents never listened to such lectures as you list, they never took any such courses as you describe, and they certainly never read such books as you have recommended." This is undoubtedly true. Their parents did not attend lectures on marriage and the family because the lectures were not given; they did not take courses because the courses were not offered; they did not read the books because the books had not been written; but their parents did have some training and

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some preparation for marriage and family life. This training and preparation they acquired in the midst of the family of which they were a part and in the home in which they lived. The young woman learned how to buy and cook and serve food; she also learned how to clean and manage a household; and she likewise learned how to care for the children and other members of the family and those who became ill. Both the young man and the young woman through living within the family became acquainted with the problems that arise in family life; and they also learned in at least an elementary way the art of accommodation and adjustment. The training was simple and the preparation was elementary, but it did assist them to understand and to meet the problems that arose in their own family experience. Through trial and error they learned how to solve the problems that develop in the relationship between husband and wife and parents and children.

Yet even this simple and elementary preparation young people do not have today. The reasons are obvious. They spend most of their time outside the home, in school, in college, in business, in places of pleasure. Young men leave early in the morning and do not come home until work is over and in the evening go out again with their friends or to places of entertainment. Young women take either academic or vocational courses to prepare themselves for some career. When they return home, they do not feel any family responsibility. Most young women, in fact, never attempt to learn what their mothers know about buying and cooking and serving a meal; and they know little if anything of the way in which their parents furnish and equip and manage the home. The home, in other words, no longer serves as the center of their interest and activities. More serious than this, the family has ceased to be a matter of major

concern. Young people do not sit down today to discuss family affairs and family problems with their parents, nor do they interest themselves deeply in the work and progress of their brothers and sisters. In truth, it is amazing to discover how little members of a family today know about each other. The result of this lack of close association that characterized families in other decades is that young men and women are inexperienced in the ways of family life and are unaware of the problems that they must face.

Another condition that makes better preparation necessary is the change that has taken place in our concept of marriage and family life. "You do not think of marriage in the same way that your mother and father did; and you probably have an altogether different conception of the way in which the family should be organized and the purpose it is to serve." In other generations men and women married as a matter of personal necessity or social convenience or pressure. The man wanted a wife in order to have someone to take care of his home and to bear and to rear his children. The woman wanted a husband in order to have someone to protect her and to provide for her wants in return for the services she would render. Both the man and the woman accepted and subordinated themselves to the customs and conventions of their group, which prescribed and ordained marriage. Marriages were contracted largely upon a legal or biological or economic or social basis. Most marriages were not the result of the desire and choice of two young people. They were the result of arrangements made by the parents. Parents until very recently believed that it was not only their duty but their right to select the husband for the daughter and the wife for the son and to insure the perpetuation of the family and the race. In making their selection



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they seldom if ever consulted their children. Their sole concern was with social status, economic capacity, and the future of the family. They never asked, "Do these two young people love each other?" What they did ask was this: "Does the young woman come of a good family?" "Can the young man take care of our daughter?" "Will these two young people be able to increase family possessions and advance our family welfare?"

Today young men and women expect more than this of marriage. They expect emotional satisfaction, intellectual stimulation, and comradeship, and some even expect spiritual inspiration and a sanctification of their life through marriage. They soon discover that the legal contract is not in itself sufficient, that an economic arrangement and enterprise does not hold two people together in marriage, and that the biological forces diminish in urgency and significance as the years pass. In other generations the family was organized as an autocracy, and its function was largely limited to the meeting of economic needs. Today we discover that the family is being democratized, and we have come to realize now that its highest purpose is to develop fully rounded and richly endowed personalities. The family is changing in form of organization and in function, and these changes young people more or less consciously translate into family practice and make a part of their family programs. They do not mean to maintain the same relationship to each other as did their parents, and they do not mean to rear their children as they were reared. These new concepts of marriage and these new forms of family life demand more of men and women today than was expected of them in other periods. If young people expect more of marriage today than did their parents, they must give more to marriage; and in order to give more to marriage they must be better

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prepared. If they want to achieve more through the family, they must be more themselves, for they themselves constitute the family; and to be more they must equip themselves more adequately and more expertly than did their parents and their grandparents.

In addition to the fact that young people lack adequate preparation and in addition to the fact that their concepts of marriage and the family have changed we must also remember that life in our time is far more complicated and far more difficult than it was in other days. This is another reason for better training and larger equipment for marriage and family relationships. Perhaps there has never been a time when young men and women have faced so many problems and problems that are so intricate and disturbing as those they face today. Life exacts more from us than ever before. The changes that are taking place in our cultural organization, in our economic system, and in our political order; the convulsions that are occurring in our national and international life; the cataclysms of revolution and the catastrophe of war—all these leave even the strongest and the ablest of men and women bewildered and baffled. It is not surprising, therefore, that the untrained and the inexperienced lose their sense of direction and become confused. In no area of life is this so true as in marriage and in the family. The more we study the problems of marriage and the problems of the family, the more we realize the impact upon both marriage and the family of the forces that are shaking every social institution and that are shattering so many social conventions. Unless we build on the basis of sound knowledge, the structure of marriage and family life will not stand; unless we prepare ourselves with the utmost care and conscientiousness, we shall fail and see the work of our hands crumble into dust.

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"Evidently love is not enough." This comment is common in pre-marital interviews, and our answer must be, "No, love is not enough if your marriage is to succeed, if your family life is to survive the strain and the strife of these days of danger. You must know how to protect your marriage, and you must learn how to safeguard your family life." The natural question for them to ask is, "How can we do this?" This, we must explain to them, is the question that men and women have been studying in the social laboratories. We now know something of the conditions that hinder marriage and something of the conditions that help. Dr. Robert L. Dickinson and his colleagues have proved that there are certain biological conditions that either mar the marriage relationship or make marriage in our sense of the term utterly impossible. Prof. Ernest W. Burgess and Prof. Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., in their studies have demonstrated that there are certain personal and social conditions that are most important in every marriage and that upon these conditions depends the happiness or unhappiness of the couple. Prof. Louis M. Terman and his associates have discovered that certain psychological conditions are not only significant in marriage but decisive in shaping marriage relationships. Prof. Ernest R. Groves and his disciples in all their books upon marriage and family life establish the fact that there are definite foundations on which the institution of marriage and the institution of the family must rest if they are to develop in safety and security.

In the chapter on Prediction in "The Meaning of Marriage and the Foundations of the Family" I have summed up my own views in these words: "On the basis of experience, observations, case study, and statistical analysis I believe that it is now possible to list the conditions that hinder marriage and also list the condi-

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tions that aid in adjustment and that promote happiness in marriage and family relationships.

### I. *Preparation*

“Ignorance and lack of proper preparation hinder marriage, whereas knowledge and adequate training and experience greatly help. The more men and women know about themselves and the other sex, about housekeeping and home-making, about the meaning of marriage and the foundations on which the family must rest the less difficult it will be to solve the problems that marriage and family life always present.

### II. *Economic Security*

“Lack of earning power and low income hinder marriage, whereas occupational ability, the necessary equipment, and economic security unquestionably assist. Economic insecurity, due to incompetence, inexperience, unemployment, intermittent and uncertain income, is in itself a cause of trouble, and undoubtedly affects every favorable factor and also aggravates every adverse condition.

### III. *Health*

“Physical weakness and psychological defects hinder marriage, whereas a healthy body and a sound mind aid in many ways. Ill health, physical infirmities make it difficult to meet the responsibilities and to bear the burdens; and mental aberrations and emotional instability make it impossible to cope with the complexities of marriage and family relationships.

### IV. *Temperament*

“Wide difference in temperament hinders marriage, whereas similarity of nature and disposition increases the

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prospects. Men and women who are temperamentally incompatible, who are mutually antipathetic, out of sympathy with each other, whose coming together creates discord and conflict, cannot hope to live in harmony no matter how favorable other conditions may be.

### V. *Interests*

"Divergence of interests and activities hinders marriage, whereas community of interests and cooperation in enterprises encourage comradeship. The husband and wife who do not share each other's aims, objectives, ambitions, aspirations, who live on different planes and move in different orbits, lose contact with each other, inevitably drift apart, and form other associations and alien alliances.

### VI. *Social Background*

"Disparity in social background and cultural development hinders marriage, whereas similarity in culture and social environment promotes understanding and concord. When the husband and wife come from different cultural levels, when one is uncouth in manner, coarse in speech, crude in taste, and the other is sensitive, cultivated, and refined, embarrassment and distress are constant companions.

### VII. *Race, Religion, Nationality*

"Difference in race, religion, nationality hinders marriage, whereas likeness of racial origin, religious beliefs, national customs and practices aids in preserving peace. Men and women cannot escape their life-long associations, their education, their group loyalties. Dissimilarity in attitudes and outlooks, latent prejudices, and active partisanship are always a handicap and a hazard.

VIII. *Standards and Ideals*

“Disagreement in moral standards and ethical ideals hinders marriage, whereas acceptance of the same code of conduct and the same ideals in life increases happiness. If the husband and the wife live in accordance with different codes, one high and the other low, they not only come to disapprove of each other, they in time come to condemn each other’s conduct and this ends in conflict and disruption.

IX. *Sincerity*

“Secrecy and insincerity always hinder marriage, whereas confidence and trust never fail to deepen happiness. If the husband and the wife cannot confide in each other, if they cannot speak to each other in utter frankness, if they conceal from each other what they outwardly possess and inwardly are, they cannot attain that oneness of mind, that elevation of heart, that intimate freedom and communion of spirit that is the most precious element in the highest happiness.

X. *Age*

“It is difficult to define the best age range for either the man or the woman. But it is clear that men and women below 20 are as a rule too immature to marry and that women over 30 and men over 35 find it increasingly difficult to make the adjustments that marriage demands. The best age range for women seems to be between 20 and 25 and for men between 25 and 30. The difference in age between the man and the woman is less important than the difference in development, mental, emotional, spiritual. It is true that if a woman today is 20 and the man 35, the woman will be 45 and the man 60 twenty-five years hence. But the man at 60 may not be more mature than the woman at 45.

## INITIAL INTERVIEW

### XI. *Childhood Home*

“Young men and women who come out of unhappy homes have less chance for happiness in their own marriage, whereas young men and women who come out of a harmonious and happy home have a greater chance. Unconsciously children breathe in the atmosphere that surrounds them and if the atmosphere is tainted with suspicion and hostility, they inhale the poison and may never eliminate it altogether from their system.

### XII. *Children*

“Children play a most important part in marriage. In some women the maternal feeling is very strong and in some men the paternal feeling is of equal strength though not as often expressed. If a wife wants children and the husband does not or vice versa, this may become a grave cause of dissension and unhappiness. Men and women may reconcile themselves to a childless comradeship; but there is always something lacking in their life. Children complete and consummate marriage.”

## CHAPTER 3

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

One thing that men and women know little about is the Marriage Law and its implications. Perhaps the simplest way to approach this subject is to inquire, "Have you secured your marriage license?" If they have, we may ask to see it. A reading of the marriage license will give us information that it is necessary for us to have. It will give us the full name of the man and the woman, the address and age and occupation of each, the birthplace of each one, and also the name and birthplace of the parents. The license will also tell us whether this is the first or second marriage and whether or not either the man or the woman has been divorced. Another question that we can ask is this: "Are you planning to have a civil or a religious service?" They may not know the difference between the two, and they may not know what in some cases is necessary, that they may have a civil ceremony first and a religious ceremony later. If they mean to have a civil service first and a religious ceremony later, they must be told that the religious ceremony will require a duplicate marriage license. If they have not secured the marriage license, we should urge them to apply for the license as soon as possible. One never knows what difficulty may develop or what impediment may appear when the application is made. Not infrequently the license clerk discovers a condition that must be met before the license can be issued. It is wise, therefore, to visit the license clerk as early as possible.



## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The next point is to explain to the young couple the reason for a marriage license and its meaning. Now and then young men and women openly say, "Our marriage is a private matter, and we see no reason why the state should be interested or should interfere." These young men and women must learn that marriage is much more than a private affair, that it is a matter of social concern, and that society must protect itself against the marriages of those men and women whose marriage would impose unbearable burdens upon the community. Therefore, according to the law of the United States no one can be married without first securing a license from the state in which he dwells or in which he is to be married. And no one is permitted to perform a marriage service without a license issued by the state through an authorized agent. In other words, the states in this country assume jurisdiction over the matter of marriage, and the more progressive ones refuse to recognize the relationship of a man and woman as one of marriage unless the relationship has been authorized and sanctioned by the state. This means that what was once known as the common-law marriage is now being outlawed. If two people wish to live together and to be known as husband and wife, if they wish to enjoy the rights involved in this relationship, they must first secure the permission of the state.

Each state has its own form of application and its own form of the marriage license and the marriage certificate, the contents of which are prescribed by the Marriage Law. The affidavit that is prescribed by the state of New York and the marriage license and the marriage certificate have been carefully phrased and formulated. While they do not embody every point that students of marriage believe should be incorporated in these documents, they do constitute an advance

over the forms that many states have adopted and continue to employ. The forms for New York state are on pages 63-66.

The license, men and women must understand, is permissive and is not mandatory. It does not require or compel anyone to marry the couple. It merely gives the couple permission to be married in the state in which the license is issued and does nothing more than authorize those specified by law to perform the ceremony within that state. It is very important for the couple to understand this, for upon further study the civil officer or the clergyman may decide not to marry the couple. One state, for example, may issue a license to a couple who come from another state. The minister or the justice of the peace may, however, upon further inquiry come to the conclusion that the young couple are eloping, that the young woman is marrying without the knowledge and consent of her parents, that the marriage is unwise; and he may feel that for these and other reasons he cannot sanction or perform the marriage service. Not infrequently young men and women are surprised and indignant when someone refuses to perform the service. "We have a license to be married. We cannot understand why you will not marry us." They do not realize that the license is nothing more than an authorization, that it is not a command of the state that must be obeyed. We must therefore patiently explain the law to them so that they will understand that ministers and officers of the state are altogether within their rights when they decline to perform a marriage ceremony.

Some ministers and some civil officers, it is true, believe that the license is in itself sufficient. It is not their duty, they claim, to require more than does the law of the state or to question what the state authorizes. The clergyman and the justice of the peace are of

# LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19-2022-20-20

STATE OF NEW YORK

No. ....

## Affidavit for License to Marry

STATE OF NEW YORK  
County of New York, City of New York  
Borough of Manhattan

Date of Marriage .....  
Church .....  
Location .....  
Clergyman .....

GROOM

and

BRIDE

applicants for a license for marriage, being severally sworn, depose and say, that to the best of their knowledge and belief the following statement respectively signed by them is true, and that no legal impediment exists as to the right of each of the applicants to enter into the marriage state.

### FROM THE GROOM:

Full name .....  
Color or race .....  
Place of residence .....  
(Street Address)

Age .....  
(Date of Birth) (Year)

Occupation.....

Place of birth.....

Full name of father.....

Country of birth of father.....

Full maiden name of mother.....

Country of birth of mother.....

Number of previous marriages of groom.....

Full names of wife or (1) .....  
wives during former (2) .....  
marriages. (3) .....

Are they living or dead.....

Is applicant a divorced person.....

If so, when and where and against whom divorce

or divorces were granted.....

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

Where did applicant live last with each wife. ....

Grounds of the divorces. ....

Where was defendant served with summons.....

Did defendant appear in person in Court.....

Or by attorney or serve answer or waiver.....

I declare that no legal impediment exists as to my

right to enter into the marriage state.

I have had the examination and laboratory test

required by the Domestic Relations Law of

persons about to marry, made primarily to

ascertain presence or absence of syphilis infection

in its communicable stage, and such test

showed no evidence of syphilis and it is my belief

that I am free of such infection; nor am I infected

with any other venereal disease, to the best of

my knowledge and belief.

SIGNATURE OF GROOM

Subscribed and sworn to before me this

.....day of.....19.....

Clerk.

### FROM THE BRIDE:

Full name .....  
Color or race .....  
Place of residence .....  
(Street Address)

Age .....  
(Date of Birth) (Year)

Occupation.....

Place of birth.....

Full name of father.....

Country of birth of father.....

Full maiden name of mother.....

Country of birth of mother.....

Number of previous marriages of bride.....

Full names of husband/ 1 .....  
or husbands during 2 .....  
former marriages. (3) .....

Are they living or dead.....

Is applicant a divorced person.....

If so, when and where and against whom divorce

or divorces were granted.....

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

Where did applicant live last with each husband

Grounds of the divorces. ....

Where was defendant served with summons.....

Did defendant appear in person in Court.....

Or by attorney or serve answer or waiver.....

I declare that no legal impediment exists as to my

right to enter into the marriage state.

I have had the examination and laboratory test

required by the Domestic Relations Law of

persons about to marry, made primarily to

ascertain presence or absence of syphilis infection

in its communicable stage, and such test

showed no evidence of syphilis and it is my belief

that I am free of such infection; nor am I infected

with any other venereal disease, to the best of

my knowledge and belief.

SIGNATURE OF BRIDE

# MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

## CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_, who have hereto subscribed \_\_\_\_\_ name, do hereby  
consent that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Minor)  
who is \_\_\_\_\_ and who is under the age of \_\_\_\_\_ years, having been born  
(My or our Son, Daughter or Ward)  
\_\_\_\_\_, shall be united in marriage to \_\_\_\_\_  
19\_\_\_\_, shall be united in marriage to \_\_\_\_\_  
by any minister of the gospel or other person authorized by law to solemnize marriages.  
Witness my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signatures of Parents or Guardian)

## CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_, who have hereto subscribed \_\_\_\_\_ name, do hereby  
consent that \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Minor)  
who is \_\_\_\_\_ and who is under the age of \_\_\_\_\_ years, having been born  
(My or our Son, Daughter or Ward)  
\_\_\_\_\_, shall be united in marriage to \_\_\_\_\_  
19\_\_\_\_, shall be united in marriage to \_\_\_\_\_  
by any minister of the gospel or other person authorized by law to solemnize marriages.  
Witness my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signatures of Parents or Guardian)

# LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10-3024 10-50 40

## THIS MARRIAGE LICENSE IS VALID FOR SIXTY DAYS

THIS IS A MARRIAGE LICENSE, AND NOT A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE. The Marriage Certificate on the reverse side should be filled out and filed promptly by the Clergyman or Magistrate as required by law, with the Town or City Clerk who issued the license. See that your marriage is thus recorded.

PLACE OF REGISTRY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
County of New York  
City of New York  
Borough of Manhattan

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Division of Vital Statistics

## MARRIAGE LICENSE Registered No. ....

Know all Men by this Certificate, that any person authorized by law to perform marriage ceremonies within the State of New York to whom this may come, he, not knowing any lawful impediment thereto, is hereby authorized and empowered to solemnize the rites of matrimony between ..... of ..... of ..... in the county of ..... and State of New York and ..... of ..... in the county of ..... and State of New York and to certify the same to be said parties or either of them under his hand and seal in his ministerial or official capacity and thereupon he is required to return his certificate in the form hereto annexed. The statements endorsed hereon or annexed hereto by me subscribed, contain a full and true abstract of all of the facts concerning such parties disclosed by their affidavits or verified statements presented to me upon the application for this license.

In Testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said City at the Municipal Building, Manhattan, NOT VALID FOR 72 HOURS

SEAL

City Clerk.

The following is a full and true abstract of all the facts disclosed by the above-named applicants in their verified statements presented to me upon their applications for the above license:

### FROM THE GROOM:

Full name .....  
Color or race .....  
Place of residence .....  
(Current Address)

Age .....  
(Date of Birth) (Year)

Occupation .....  
Place of birth .....  
Full name of father .....  
Country of birth of father .....  
Full maiden name of mother .....  
Country of birth of mother .....  
Number of previous marriages of groom .....  
Full names of wife or 1. ....  
wives during former 2. ....  
marriages. 3. ....  
Are they living or dead .....  
Is applicant a divorced person .....  
If so, when and where and against whom divorce or divorces were granted .....  
1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....  
Where did applicant live last with each wife .....  
Grounds of the divorces .....  
Where was defendant served with summons .....  
Did defendant appear in person in Court .....  
Or by attorney or serve answer or waiver .....  
I declare that no legal impediment exists as to my right to enter into the marriage state.  
I have had the examination and laboratory test required by the Domestic Relations Law of persons about to marry, made primarily to ascertain presence or absence of syphilis infection in its communicable stage, and such test showed no evidence of syphilis and it is my belief that I am free of such infection; nor am I infected with any other venereal disease, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Such application was accompanied by papers complying with the applicable requirements of section thirteen-a of the Domestic Relations Law, relative to examination and health of the parties.

Such compliance was dispensed with, wholly or partly, by order of a Judge or Justice.

City Clerk.

City Clerk.

### FROM THE BRIDE:

Full name .....  
Color or race .....  
Place of residence .....  
(Current Address)

Age .....  
(Date of Birth) (Year)

Occupation .....  
Place of birth .....  
Full name of father .....  
Country of birth of father .....  
Full maiden name of mother .....  
Country of birth of mother .....  
Number of previous marriages of bride .....  
Full names of husband ( 1 .....  
or husbands during 2 .....  
former marriages. 3 .....  
Are they living or dead .....  
Is applicant a divorced person .....  
If so, when and where and against whom divorce or divorces were granted .....  
1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....  
Where did applicant live last with each husband .....  
Grounds of the divorces .....  
Where was defendant served with summons .....  
Did defendant appear in person in Court .....  
Or by attorney or serve answer or waiver .....  
I declare that no legal impediment exists as to my right to enter into the marriage state.  
I have had the examination and laboratory test required by the Domestic Relations Law of persons about to marry, made primarily to ascertain presence or absence of syphilis infection in its communicable stage, and such test showed no evidence of syphilis and it is my belief that I am free of such infection; nor am I infected with any other venereal disease, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

# MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

The written consent of the Parents, Guardians or Person under whose care and government the Minor or Minors may be has been filed in the City Clerk's Office in the Borough of Manhattan as provided by Section 15, of Article 3 of the Domestic Relations Law.

## MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE TO CLERGYMEN AND MAGISTRATES

The license issued, including the abstract of facts, and certificate duly signed by the person who shall have solemnized the marriage therein authorized shall be returned by him to the office of the town or city clerk who issued the same within five days succeeding the date of the solemnizing of the marriage therein authorized and any person or persons who shall willfully neglect to make such return within the time above required shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five dollars or more than fifty dollars for each and every offense.

(DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW, SECTION 14)

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
residing at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York, do hereby certify that  
I did on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year A. D. 19\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ M.  
at \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York, solemnize the rites of matrimony  
between \_\_\_\_\_  
of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York, and  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_ and State of New York in the  
presence of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
as witness and the license therefor is hereto annexed.

Witness my hand at \_\_\_\_\_ in the county of \_\_\_\_\_  
this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A. D. 19\_\_\_\_

In presence of

(Signature of Witness)

(Signature of Person Performing Ceremony)

Residence \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of Witness)

(Address of Person Performing Ceremony)

Residence \_\_\_\_\_

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

course agents of the state, according to the law. But they are both more than this. The justice of the peace is a representative of society, and the minister is a representative of his religion. As a representative of society and as a representative of religion they may insist upon conditions in addition to those required by the state. Many ministers and many civil officers are of the opinion that the marriage laws today demand too little and that we therefore should ask more of those who marry. For example, many men and women believe that every couple should have a thorough and complete examination by a competent physician; many believe that the man and woman should know each other well before entering upon a marriage that we assume will be permanent. Many men and women believe there are conditions that should prohibit marriage and that are not included in any Marriage Law. It is the privilege of the minister or the justice of the peace to decline to perform a marriage ceremony when in his opinion the conditions that warrant marriage are absent. It is, in fact, more than their privilege; it is their duty.

The Marriage Law, we must remember, is a part of the Domestic Relations Law of the state, and each state has its own Domestic Relations Law which is a part of the incorporated laws of the state. These state laws differ from each other in a number of ways; thus in the United States we have forty-eight different marriage laws. Therefore, it is necessary to study carefully and to understand the law of the state in which the couple has established legal residence or the state in which the ceremony is to be performed. Some states do not recognize the Marriage Law of other states. For a long time many students of the subject of marriage have advocated a uniform marriage law, that is, a law that would be the same in every state; and other students have recom-

mended a Federal Marriage Law. But a Federal Marriage Law Congress could not pass without an amendment to the Constitution that would delegate to the Federal Government the power that is now possessed by the states, that is, the power to authorize and to sanction marriage. There is no doubt that the present condition in the United States leads to many complications and to much confusion. This is especially true when a couple is married according to the civil law of one state and wishes to have a religious ceremony performed in another. There is nothing to do, however, but to live in accordance with the law and to labor for its amendment and improvement from year to year and eventually for a uniform law for all states in the country.

The law states that the marriage may be solemnized by certain civil servants or by a clergyman or by a written contract signed by both parties in the presence of at least two witnesses. In New York state, for example, the civil officer may be a mayor, recorder, city magistrate, police justice, police magistrate, or city clerk; or the civil officer may be a justice or judge of a court of record or of a municipal court or a police justice of a village or a justice of the peace. The law also states that two persons may solemnize their marriage by signing a written contract that is also signed by two witnesses and acknowledged before a judge of a court of record. This provision is included in order to cover the marriage custom of the Quakers who have no ministers and who believe that God alone can solemnize their union. The law of New York likewise states that the leaders of the Ethical Culture Society may perform a marriage ceremony. This provision is included in the law in order to meet the desire of the leaders of the Ethical Culture organization who do not regard themselves as clergymen or as ministers of religion. Before allowing one who



## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

claims to be a civil officer to perform a marriage service it is most advisable for young people to be sure of the man's credentials. Now and then a marriage has been performed by one without credentials or authorization from the state. Such questionable procedure should be avoided in so serious a matter as marriage.

The term "clergyman" included in the Marriage Law requires some explanation. If we were asked to define the word, we should say that a clergyman is a minister of religion, but the legal definition is somewhat different. According to the interpretation of the attorneys general a clergyman is an ordained minister of religion or an elected leader of a congregation incorporated under the Religious Corporations Law of the state. This means that the man who is not ordained or the man who is not an elected leader of a congregation that is legally incorporated cannot perform a legal marriage ceremony. In the state of New York the Attorney General has extended the interpretation of the word "clergyman" to include cantors in synagogues as well as rabbis. This interpretation is based upon the assertion that the cantor performs religious services within the synagogue and is an elected leader of a congregation as well as the rabbi. It is important to understand this legal definition of the term "clergyman," since in some communities men who are not ordained and who are not elected leaders of incorporated congregations assume to perform marriage services. Young people and especially young women should be sure that they are being married by a man who is legally authorized to perform the marriage service. Otherwise, the validity of the marriage service itself may at some time be questioned.

The law, it is most necessary to stress, makes marriage a civil contract. This means that the consent of parties capable in law of making a contract is essential. Both

## MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

these terms "consent" and "capable in law" need to be explained. Some men and women, according to the law, are not legally permitted to marry or to enter into a marriage contract. An ancestor and a descendant, a brother and a sister of either whole or half blood, an uncle and a niece, or an aunt and a nephew are not permitted to marry. These marriages are called incestuous and are prohibited whether the persons are legitimate or illegitimate of birth; and, if contracted, these marriages are void. In fact, the law states that those who contract such a marriage and those who solemnize or procure or aid in the solemnization of such a marriage shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined not less than \$50 or more than \$100 and may be imprisoned for a term of not more than six months. The only exception to these prohibited marriages is made by the state of Rhode Island, which permits the marriage of an uncle and a niece if both are Jewish and if the service is performed by a rabbi. The state of Rhode Island suspends its own Marriage Law in order to accommodate itself to the Jewish law, which permits the marriage of an uncle and a niece but not of an aunt and a nephew.

Other marriages in every state are absolutely void from the outset. In New York state a marriage contracted by a person whose husband or wife by a former marriage is living is void unless such former marriage has been annulled or dissolved by divorce. The law of the state of New York also declares that the guilty person in a divorce case may not marry within five years and then must have the consent of the court. A marriage is also absolutely void if contracted by a person whose husband or wife by a former marriage is living unless such former husband or wife has been finally sentenced to imprisonment for life. This law

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

applies even in cases in which the former husband or wife has been sentenced to a maximum term of life imprisonment with the privilege at the end of a prescribed less term of applying to the parole board for a release on parole or for an absolute discharge. A marriage is likewise absolutely void if contracted by a person whose husband or wife by a former marriage is living unless such former husband or wife has absented himself or herself for five successive years then last past without being known to such persons to be living during that time. This is the so-called Enoch Arden law. The law authorizes the court in these cases to enter a formal decree declaring such marriages void; but even without this decree the marriage is regarded as void from its inception.

The phrase "want of understanding" means that one of the parties is mentally incapable of understanding the nature, effect, and consequence of a marriage. This clearly includes idiots and lunatics who at the time of the marriage were insane. As a matter of law the marriage can be annulled only when it can be proved that want of understanding existed at the time the marriage took place. Mental incapacity arising subsequently to the time of marriage is not sufficient cause for annulment. The general rule also is that a man is presumed sane until the contrary is proved. Therefore, the marriage cannot be annulled on the ground of want of understanding until this presumption has been overthrown by proof that is clear and satisfactory to the court. The fact that a man or woman suffered an attack of insanity before marriage or developed an attack after marriage is not legally a ground for annulment. In other words, a man or woman who is insane and marries during a lucid interval is validly married, according to the law of the state. Whether a man or woman who is intoxicated

## MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

or under the influence of a drug at the time of marriage is suffering from a want of understanding is still legally debatable. There can, however, be no debate that such a marriage is immoral and should not be contracted. A marriage may therefore be legal even though it is a violation of morals.

Other marriages are voidable, that is, the marriage may be annulled by the court, if action for annulment is instituted. Voidable marriages include cases in which either party thereto: is under the age of legal consent; is incapable of consenting to a marriage for want of understanding; is incapable of entering into the marriage state from physical cause; consents to such marriage by reason of force, duress, or fraud; has a husband or wife by a former marriage living, and such former husband or wife has absented himself or herself for five successive years then last past without being known to such party to be living during that time. Each one of these conditions requires some comment or explanation. The age of consent is not the same as the age of a minor. A minor is a person under twenty-one years of age. The age of consent, however, is eighteen. When the man is under twenty-one years of age and the woman is under eighteen, according to the law of the state, he or she must secure the consent of parents or guardian in order to marry. How old a person must be in order to marry with the consent of parents or guardian is still a matter of question in some states. Some states allow marriage with the consent of the guardian at the age of fourteen and some even at the age of twelve, but the usual age stated is sixteen. The state, however, it must be admitted, does not always investigate the statements made by the young man and the young woman, and some do falsify their age. Even if the consent of parents or guardian has been secured, a marriage can be annulled if either party married under the age of consent.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The phrase "physical cause" means physical incapacity to enter into the marriage relationship, a condition that is usually described as impotence. It must be proved, however, that impotence existed at the time of marriage, has continued to exist at the time of legal action, and is incurable. It may not be difficult to prove that this physical condition existed at the time of marriage, and it may not be difficult to prove that it continues to exist at the time of legal action; but it may be very difficult to prove that the condition is incurable. The new knowledge of glands and their function, the new science of endocrinology, has resulted in miraculous changes in the glandular systems of both men and women. Glands that were dormant have been stimulated into action and maturity, and many cases of so-called impotence have been cured. It is also known now from the findings of psychiatry that many cases of impotence are due to psychological causes and that through psychiatric treatment these causes can be removed and impotence cured. Few physicians therefore are willing to swear in a court action that any case of impotence is incurable. Impotence does not, of course, include sterility. Sterility, in fact, in either the man or the woman is not a ground for the annulment of a marriage. Even in systems of law in which sterility is a cause for divorce this cause is seldom invoked and is discountenanced by the courts.

"Force and duress" are self-explanatory: If a person enters into marriage as a result of a threat of personal injury, if a person is abducted and consents to a marriage through fear and in order to secure her liberty, the marriage may be annulled, but the threat must be made by the other party to the contract. A threat made by a third party without knowledge of the other party to the contract is not a ground for annulment. In other words, a marriage to be legal requires the willing agreement of

both parties to the contract. "The legal principles governing the authority of the court to annul a marriage on the ground of duress of one of the parties thereto are essentially the same as those applied when the annulment of any other contract is requested upon the like ground, . . . and to be available as a ground for relief it must appear that the duress of the party asking to be relieved was occasioned by the other contracting party, or that he knowingly used or availed himself of such duress as a means of procuring the contract sought to be annulled." "In an action to annul a marriage on the ground of duress the plaintiff, in order to succeed, must satisfy the court that the duress was occasioned by the other contracting party or that he knowingly used or availed himself of it as a means of procuring the marriage, and it must also appear that the threats of defendant alleged in the complaint constrained the will of the plaintiff and induced her promise." These are the words of the court in decisions rendered.

The term "fraud" has been interpreted by the courts in a number of ways, some of which are clear to the laymen and others of which are extremely puzzling. A marriage will not be annulled for fraud unless the facts misrepresented or concealed go to the very essence of the contract. The marriage will not be annulled unless the misrepresentations were of such a nature as to be calculated to deceive a reasonably prudent person. Nor will a marriage be annulled if the misrepresentations were unintentional; nor if a man falsely represented his character or the extent and value of his worldly belongings; nor if a woman concealed the fact, to quote an interesting decision, that she has a swollen tongue or inflammation of the bladder. But the courts will annul a marriage if there is concealment by either party at the time of marriage of active tuberculosis, a venereal disease,

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insanity, or epilepsy. If a man has engaged in criminal activities before his marriage and conceals this fact from the woman he marries, the marriage can be annulled. If a woman induces a man to marry her on the ground that he is the father of her child and this statement is proved not to be the case, the marriage can be annulled. In one case the court annulled a marriage because a woman persuaded a man who believed in spiritualism that the spirits ordered the marriage to take place. A false statement in regard to chastity prior to marriage is not in itself a ground for annulment.

In addition to requiring certain conditions of those who wish to marry, the marriage contract does something else. It confers certain rights upon the two parties to the contract, and it also imposes upon each one certain responsibilities. These rights and responsibilities are implied in the contract and are contained explicitly in the Common Law and the Domestic Relations Law of the state. An interesting thing about these rights and responsibilities is that they change with changing social conceptions and the changing status of women in the course of the centuries. Not many decades ago the Common Law assumed that in marriage the man and the woman are one, and, as one jurist put it, that one is the husband. The woman possessed no legal rights as a wife; she belonged legally to her husband, and what she possessed became his and did not remain hers. As the movement for the emancipation of woman progressed, however, women insisted more and more upon legal recognition and upon legal rights. They have not even today achieved equal legal status with men in all states, but they have succeeded in ending the ancient fiction that a woman ceases to be a legal entity when she marries. Today she possesses rights that establish her as a person in law.

The legal rights of a married woman are expressed in the Married Women's Property Act as follows: "Property, real or personal, now owned by a married woman, or hereafter owned by a woman at the time of her marriage, or acquired by her as prescribed in this chapter, and the rents, issues, proceeds and profits thereof, shall continue to be her sole and separate property as if she were unmarried, and shall not be subject to her husband's control or disposal nor liable for his debts." The revolutionary character of this act is expressed in the following: "The general effect of the Married Women's Property Acts commencing with the pioneer act of 1848, as amended in 1849 (L. 1848, ch. 200; L. 1848, ch. 375), 'is, to deprive the husband of all right to, or interest in his wife's property during her life. By the unity of persons, the common law transferred to the husband all the personal property of the wife absolutely, and gave him the usufruct of all her real estate during their joint lives, and after her death, issue being born, an estate for his life. The intention of the legislature was to overturn all these provisions of the common law, which bestowed upon the husband the property of the wife, and confer upon the latter the unrestrained right to and control over such property as if the marital relation did not exist.' "

As a result of the passage of the Married Women's Property Act and the interpretation thereof by the courts the status of woman in marriage has been completely changed. She now possesses legal rights and powers that endow her with a new legal personality. The legal powers of a married woman that follow from the Act are clearly stipulated in the law: "A married woman has all the rights in respect to property, real or personal, and the acquisition, use, enjoyment and disposition thereof, and to make contracts in respect thereto with any person, including her husband, and



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to carry on any business, trade or occupation, and to exercise all powers and enjoy all rights in respect thereto and in respect to her contracts, and be liable on such contracts, as if she were unmarried; but a husband and wife can not contract to alter or dissolve the marriage or to relieve the husband from his liability to support his wife. All sums that may be recovered in actions or special proceedings by a married woman to recover damages to her person, estate or character shall be the separate property of the wife. Judgment for or against a married woman may be rendered and enforced, in a court of record, or not of record, as if she was single. A married woman may confess a judgment specified in section one thousand two hundred and seventy-three of the code of civil procedure."

The man, it must be recognized, still has the legal responsibility of maintaining his wife and his children. His wife can sue him for non-support if he fails to acknowledge this responsibility. What maintenance means is a matter for the court to decide, and the decision is now based upon the answer to a number of questions. "What is the man's income or earning capacity? What are the needs of the wife and the children? What standards of life is it necessary for them to assume?" Maintenance includes today more than shelter and food and clothing; it also includes medical and dental care, and in some cases private schools and even travel. A man is also legally responsible for what his wife purchases for both herself and her children and for the household, unless he can prove that she has been reckless and extravagant. He is likewise responsible for funeral expenses incident to the burial of his wife. On the other hand, the man possesses a legal right to what he earns or acquires through inheritance or gifts. He is able legally to enter into arrangements or contracts with

or without the consent of his wife as long as these arrangements and contracts do not invade her rights. These questions may never arise in the course of a marriage; but there are many marriages in which the woman does at some time inquire, "What are my rights and what are the responsibilities of my husband?"

The rights and responsibilities of parents are also included in this discussion. Parents are the natural and legal guardians of their children. They are legally responsible for their children's welfare and education. If for any reason they do not fulfill these responsibilities, they can be summoned to court. The law, for example, makes education up to sixteen and in some states up to eighteen compulsory. It is the duty of the parents to send their children to school, and if they fail to do so, the State can compel them to act or punish them if they fail. It is the duty of parents to provide for their children properly and to treat them humanely. If they fail to do this, the State can step in and remove the child or children from the home and custody of the parents. Every now and then we read of a child in some community who is neglected or maltreated. In these cases the parent or parents are usually discovered to be habitual delinquents, though in some cases they are found to be only cruel and inhuman and in a few cases to be suffering with a nervous or mental condition. The State in these cases has the power to remove the child and to arrange for its proper care. The implication clearly is that the child is entitled to protection by its parents, and if parents for some reason are unable or unwilling to give this protection, the State must intervene in the interest of the child. The theory in this matter is that the child is the ward of the State, and the State is the ultimate guardian of the child.

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The Divorce Law is not a part of the Domestic Relations Law, but the subject of divorce is so closely associated with marriage that we must include divorce in any discussion of the legal implications of marriage. Among the couples that come to us for counsel we not infrequently find that either the man or the woman has been divorced. It is therefore necessary for us to know something of the conditions of divorce and the procedure that is involved. We must recognize that the contract of marriage that is authorized and sanctioned by the state cannot be dissolved by the two parties without the consent of the state. They may agree to separate and may draw up a separation agreement, which will serve as a legal document in case the terms are not fulfilled by either party. This is known as voluntary separation. Or one or the other may sue for separation through court action and allow the court to decide upon the terms of separation including allowances and the custody of children and other matters. But their marriage contract cannot be abrogated except by a court of jurisdiction. The court in all cases and in every state is limited by the cause or causes for divorce contained in the Divorce Law of the state in which the case is tried. Some states have a limited divorce law, and other states have a liberal divorce law. But the court in each state cannot go beyond the law and the interpretation thereof.

Each state, in other words, has its own Divorce Law, and this law stipulates the grounds on which a divorce can be granted. South Carolina has no Divorce Law, and thus no divorce can be secured in that state. The state of New York admits only one ground for divorce, that of adultery, and permits the guilty party to remarry only after five years, and then he or she must have the consent of the court. Other states allow divorce for other reasons: willful desertion for one year or more;

extreme cruelty; drunkenness; willful neglect to provide for one year; impotency at the time of marriage; conviction for felony or infamous crime; habitual indulgence in violent and ungovernable temper. Each one of these terms or conditions is subject to interpretation, and some courts are extremely lenient in interpreting the law. The legal cause assigned for divorce is seldom, however, the real cause for the disruption of the marriage. It is therefore necessary for us to inquire carefully into the previous marriage of the divorced person. It may be that the divorce was altogether warranted, that the previous marriage was a mistake, and that the only solution was dissolution. On the other hand, it may be that the conditions that led to divorce were such as to persist and to prejudice any subsequent marriage. In such cases we must decide whether to counsel or to discourage the marriage that is contemplated.

Much confusion and a great deal of suffering have resulted from the fact that each state has its own Divorce Law and that some states have refused to recognize as legal and valid a divorce secured in certain other states. A man divorced in Nevada or in Florida, for example, could be charged with bigamy if he remarries and moves to New York state. All this confusion, however, has been ended through a remarkable decision handed down by the Supreme Court of the United States in December, 1942. In this decision, in which four justices concurred and from which two dissented, Justice Douglas writes as follows: "Our own views as to the marriage institution and the avenues of escape which some states have created are immaterial. It is a Constitution which we are expounding—a Constitution which in no small measure brings separate sovereign states into an integrated whole through the medium of the full faith and credit clause." "Within the limits of her political power North

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Carolina may, of course, enforce her own policy regarding the marriage relation. But society also has an interest in the avoidance of polygamous marriages and in the protection of innocent offspring of marriages deemed legitimate in other jurisdictions." This decision means that North Carolina and every state in the Union must recognize the validity of divorces granted in every other state.

It is well for every couple to know that the law does allow avenues of escape, that marriage can be annulled or dissolved by the State. But it is much more important for them to understand that marriage cannot be approached in an experimental spirit. The marriage that begins merely as an experiment is likely to prove the unwisdom of the union. It is true that marriage is a civil contract, according to the law, and that the contract can be abrogated with the consent of the State and through court procedure when it ceases to be in the public interest. To think of marriage as nothing more than a contract, however, is to forget the other foundations on which marriage must rest, the other foundations that we are to discuss in the course of the pre-marital conference. Marriage is something more than an association of two persons that is authorized and sanctioned by the law; marriage is something more than a biological adventure; marriage is something more than an economic enterprise; marriage is something more even than a comradeship of minds; to think of marriage as nothing more than a secular institution is to forget the higher sanctions that sanctify the relationship of husband and wife today and lift marriage to the level of consecration and holiness. When two young people realize and experience the sanctity of the marriage relationship, the law itself becomes nothing more than the outward social approval of an inward spiritual certitude.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ECONOMIC BASIS

It may seem a little impertinent to discuss the economic basis of marriage with the young couple; but this subject is so fundamental that we cannot omit it. One way to approach the problem is to ask, "Where are you planning to live? Tell me something about the home you are establishing." These and similar questions show an interest in the welfare of the young people that they do not always expect and that they do appreciate. Where and how they are to live is very important to them. They have spent much time in discussing these questions, and in most cases they welcome the opportunity to discuss them with someone else who understands and can be helpful. They may tell us that they are planning to live with either the family of the bride or the family of the bridegroom; or they may tell us that they are planning to take a furnished apartment for a time, as many young people do; or they may tell us that they are planning to furnish their own home and that it is now almost ready. Any answer they give will naturally lead to the points we should like to discuss with them: the amount they need in order to marry; the source or sources of their income; the way in which the income should be expended; what both the young man and the young woman should know today about housekeeping and homemaking.

If they tell us that they are planning to live with one or with the other family, we may ask, "Why?" Usually it is in order to save expense, though sometimes there

are other and important reasons. The young people may not be sure of the section of the community or even of the community itself in which they want to live; or the young woman may think it advisable or even necessary to continue her employment, in which case she would have little time left for taking care of a home; or the young man may find that he must be away from home a great deal on account of his work, or he may expect to be drafted for some form of service. Whatever the reason, we should explain to the young man and the young woman the hazards and dangers involved in living with another family, even their own. It is very difficult for some parents to think of their own daughter as a wife and for some parents to think of their son as a husband. It is inevitable that the young people should sense these attitudes and should react to the influence of the members of the family with whom they live. The attitude and the influence of others, we must remember, even when most interested and affectionate, are always hampering and may become very disturbing. In extreme cases the young people may discover that their marriage is completely subordinated to the welfare of their parents. This situation is always a grave source of discord.

It is much wiser for two young people, we must remind them, to begin their married life together and unhindered by the presence of relatives and friends, even though they may be the closest. This does not mean that they must or should separate themselves from those who have been nearest to them or that they should not seek the counsel of those they have come to trust. On the contrary, young people should maintain a close relationship with both the families from which they come, a relationship that will now be deepened and enriched because of their own marital experiences. And they

should undoubtedly constantly consult their parents when problems arise, such problems as come even in the happiest homes. But they must be so situated as to be free to express themselves and their feelings for each other without embarrassment. This they cannot do in the presence of others. And they should also feel free to cultivate their own married life in keeping with their own standards and their own ideals. These standards and these ideals may not be the same as those of their parents. It is therefore best for them, in order not to give offense or to incur disfavor, to live in their own home where they can live in their own way. This is especially true in the case of young people who come from families that represent a culture of another country. The clashes between parents and children, we must remember, are often due not to differences between the standards of one generation and another but to the differences between two cultures.

If they tell us that they are planning to furnish and to live in their own home, we may express the hope that they mean to begin their married life in a simple and unpretentious manner. There is some danger that young people may assume to begin their married life on too ambitious a plane. Some young people seem to think that it is necessary to begin where their parents left off; that they must start their married life and their home with all that their parents have achieved in the course of twenty or twenty-five years of work and experience. This may be due in large part not so much to the young people as to the parents and especially to the parents of the young woman, who quite naturally but most unwisely desire for their daughter not only all that she has been accustomed to have in her own home but all that they desire her to have in her new home. Some young people also seem to think that they must begin



at least as well as their friends and the members of their social set. The young woman may feel that she would be ashamed to invite her friends to a home that is less than theirs; and the young man may feel or may be made to feel that it would be a disgrace to establish a home on a lower level than his comrades are able to afford. Too many young people, in fact, think too little of what they need and too much of what their friends possess. Social independence is just as important as intellectual and political independence and should be prized by all young men and women.

How much better it is, we may say and emphasize, for young people to begin their married life simply and then have the joy of building up their home together, month by month and year by year! If they have everything their parents can lavish upon them, what incentive have they to improve their own status? They are robbed of the very thing that makes life mean so much, the happiness of creating their home with their own hands. At the end of every year they should be able to look around them and say to each other, "This we have added and this we have improved. This home is our own home. We have made it ourselves and we rejoice in our handiwork." They are entitled to this feeling, and we must not take from them the pride in their own creative power. And still there are many mothers and fathers who fail to understand this and many young people who are therefore handicapped in their marriage from the very inception of their married life. There is a profound philosophy in the old adage that we possess only what we ourselves create, that we enjoy only what we work to achieve. This is essentially true in marriage and the home. There is a vast difference in the feeling of a young married woman who displays to her friends what her family has given her, and the young woman

who shows with pride what she herself has made and accomplished. The joy of creation is infinitely deeper than the pleasure of possession.

"How much do you think two people should have in order to start life together?" This question always arises in the course of the discussion. There is no one answer that will cover all couples. The cost of living and of married life differs with time and with place and also with the standard of life that the young people mean to maintain. Perhaps the safest way is to begin with the minimum that is required in the community in which the young people are to live. "What is the lowest sum on which you think two young people can live in this city?" This means what is the least they can allow for rent, for food, for clothing, for medical care, for recreation, and for other items? We may discover that the lowest sum necessary in this community is, let us say, \$30 a week. "But we have more than that," they tell us. This is fortunate. The young people may then consider a higher standard of living, a better neighborhood, better food, better clothing, more entertainment, more books. They may also consider other things such as insurance, savings, membership in a religious organization, and contributions to social movements and social causes. If they can afford it, young people from the very outset should cultivate the habit of associating themselves with important causes and with large social programs. For these causes and these programs will bring them into contact with vital and stimulating personalities and will undoubtedly enlarge the horizon of their life and deepen their sense of social responsibility.

The young people, however, may not have even the minimum; that is, the young man may not earn even \$30 a week. Then we must consider other possibilities. What are the other ways in which they can add to what the

young man earns? This leads to a serious discussion of other sources of income. One question is, Shall the wife work? By this men and women mean, Shall the wife work outside the home for money? The answer cannot be a simple yes or no in all cases. If it is necessary for the wife to work in order that two young people may marry, the answer today would be yes. For it is better that the wife should work and that the couple should marry than for the young man and the young woman to live apart and suffer all that separation implies. Two words of caution, however, should be given in these cases. The first caution is this: If both the wife and the husband work outside the home during the day, then both the husband and the wife should work inside the home when they return in the evening. It is not fair to expect the young woman to spend the whole day in an office or factory plant and then to take care of the home and cook and serve meals and do all the rest in addition. This means, of course, that the man must know how to take care of the house as does his wife. He must know how to do simple things such as making the beds, setting the table, washing the dishes, cleaning the rooms, and he must also be willing to assume these duties.

The second caution is this: It should be clearly understood that the wife is not to continue to work indefinitely and without interruption. The danger is that the couple will postpone the coming of children from year to year. This is most inadvisable, for children complete and consummate the marriage. Most women have a maternal instinct and desire a child or children. Sometimes this desire is strong, so strong that if it is not fulfilled, the woman is unhappy and feels a profound sense of frustration. She becomes dissatisfied with her work and dissatisfied with her marriage and is in danger of developing a dislike for her husband. The young people therefore

should agree in advance that the wife is to take a maternity leave during the second or third year of marriage unless this is utterly impossible. This means that the young people must plan out the program of their married life with the maternity leave clearly in view. They must learn to set aside sufficient funds to cover the cost of a maternity leave, that is, enough for medical services and also for maintenance of the home during the time the wife must be out of work. It may also mean that the couple must plan for the care of the child when the woman returns to work, either with relatives or in a foster home or in a nursery, unless, of course, they can afford to engage someone to take care of the child while the mother is at work. This, however, is expensive, and few can afford it.

If the wife has a profession, is a teacher, lawyer, doctor, or artist, the answer to the question, "Shall the wife work?" would also be yes. This answer assumes that she is competent to take care of her home and her family and also practice her profession. She has been trained for an important type of work; she has a special form of experience; she has, therefore, a contribution to make to social life, a contribution that will not only satisfy her own desire to employ her talents but will also add to the world's spiritual wealth. Whether the wife should accept remuneration for her services is a matter of discussion, and the decision must be reached by the couple themselves. If the family needs what the woman can earn, there is no reason why she should not accept this increase in income. If the family does not need it, she may serve with effectiveness and distinction as a volunteer. Many volunteers today are as well trained as salaried workers, and they are greatly needed in most fields of service. But whether the woman serves as a volunteer or for compensation, she must be sure that she is not serving at the

expense of her children and her home. Conflicts always arise both between the husband and the wife and within the woman herself when the children and the home suffer as a result of the work of the wife and mother outside. Success in a profession does not compensate for failure in the home.

In these cases it is also necessary to caution the young man and the young woman against the danger of postponing children for too long a time, and, in addition, it is well to warn them against another danger, one that not infrequently threatens married life in these days. The couple may allow themselves to become accustomed to the standard of living that their combined incomes make possible. They select the location of their home and maintain their household and plan out their entertainments and recreation on the basis of what they both earn. When the time comes for the wife to cease work for a maternity leave or for some other reason, the couple find it difficult to adjust themselves to the new standard that a lower income makes necessary. The best way to escape this danger is for the young people to establish their standard of life on the basis of what the husband earns or will be able to earn when he is adequately trained and properly placed. This means that they must set aside in a savings account what they do not actually require, or that they invest what they do not absolutely need in activities they will easily be able to discontinue and do without. This they can easily do if they say to themselves, "This is our established program of life, a program that we are able to afford on the basis of the man's earnings and that we shall expand as his earnings increase. All other expenditures shall be for what we may call extracurricular activities."

It may be helpful at this point in the discussion to suggest the advisability of training and special prepara-

tion in this mechanical and professional age. Both the young man and the young woman undoubtedly wish to advance themselves to better positions and to a higher status. This is certainly true of the young man, but this he cannot do without adequate training and extensive experience. Positions that carry with them good salaries demand skills and equipment that can be acquired only through long and patient preparation. Most young men and women realize this but do not know where to go for accurate information and direction. A little counsel in the field of vocational guidance and training and placement may prove of great service to them as they begin their married life. If they are not trained for some special work, we should encourage them to enroll in evening courses, as many men and women do; and they should also be advised that there are some occupations that are contracting and other occupations that are expanding. They must be careful not to enter a field in which the opportunities are diminishing. The temptation, of course, is to accept a position that pays the highest wage or salary now; but this is not always the wisest thing. The position that pays highest today may disappear altogether within the next year or two. In these days rapid and revolutionary changes are taking place in industry and occupational life, and only experts are able to foresee with some degree of accuracy the trends in different fields.

There are also other factors to consider seriously. Wages or salaries, hours of work, seasonal employment, prospective increase or decrease of opportunity are all important. But these things are important, too—congeniality of employment, associations in the work, a development of special talents and capacity, and, most of all, the cultivation of personality. If a young man or a young woman is engaged in an uncongenial occupation,

the dissatisfaction and unhappiness that arise unquestionably enter into and affect marriage relationships. If the associations in factory or office or profession are unpleasant and irritating, they are a source of moods that may mar married life. If there be no freedom for the expression of special gifts and the creative impulse, the result is a sense of constriction and even of defeat that may become a silent source of disturbance in the relationship of husband and wife. In some occupations personalities unfold; in others they are crippled and even crushed. It is not always easy to counsel young people in these matters unless we have an opportunity to study them carefully and unless we ourselves have special preparation in the vocational field, but we can and should be able to direct them to those persons and to those agencies that can assure them expert study and guidance. This means that we as counselors must be in close contact with the vocational field at all times. It is necessary, indeed, that we have on file a list of individuals and agencies that specialize in vocational guidance and training and placement.

Another question that will come to the surface in a number of cases is, "Should we accept assistance from our relatives?" Some young people are very hesitant about accepting assistance from relatives, and some are very firm in their belief that they should accept no assistance from anyone. It is easy of course to understand these attitudes. Many young people cherish their independence and want to protect themselves at every point. They feel that assistance from relatives is an indictment of their own ability to maintain themselves, that it is an indignity they find difficult to tolerate. But if relatives can assist, there is no reason why they should not do so, provided, however, that the assistance is given in such a manner as not to invade or weaken the independence

of the young people or to cause them any embarrassment. One method would be to employ the principle of the dowry. The dowry is traditional in almost every social group. In accordance with this custom relatives do and should aid young people to establish themselves in their first home. But there is no reason why this principle should not be expanded to cover later needs. Relatives can aid their sons and daughters to meet emergencies when they arise, and they arise in the course of the life of almost every couple. For example, they can agree to cover the cost of sieges of sickness; they can relieve the strain of unemployment; they can contribute toward the expenses incidental to a maternity leave; they can meet the cost of the special education of grandchildren as they grow up.

Relatives do not always realize the ways in which they can serve young people and the satisfaction and happiness that this service will bring to both the young people and their families. Some parents make the mistake of thinking that they should conserve all they can earn until they die, even at the expense of their children's welfare. They must come to realize that in most instances it is better to share what they have with their sons and daughters when it is needed than to leave them sums of money in their wills. In these cases it may even be necessary for the marriage counselor to intervene and to counsel the relatives. The best counsel we can give the families is this: "Consult your children. Let your children help you to decide what to do with the funds you possess." Children and young people often feel, and rightly, that as members of the family they should have some voice in the decisions that are reached in the matter of family funds, especially when the decisions affect their own future. Some parents, for example, are ready to expend a large sum of money for an elaborate and



spectacular wedding. The young people perhaps, if they were consulted, would much prefer to have a simple wedding and to invest the money in their own home and in their own advancement. The mothers and fathers who think their children will appreciate a bequest that will become due upon the death of the parents will often be surprised to discover that their children would appreciate more gifts that would come in the course of their parents' lifetime.

After the standard of living and the sources of income have been discussed, the question of expenditures naturally arises. Who shall control the funds of the family, and who shall determine how much shall be spent and for what the expenditure shall be made? In most families the husband controls the funds. He controls what he possesses and what he earns and frequently what the children earn or possess as well. This he often does without any consultation whatever with his wife or his children. The custom in many families is for the husband to give his wife so much each week and to allow the children what he thinks they need. Women, however, have come to resent the "weekly allowance." The law, it is true, recognizes women as separate and distinct personalities with the right to hold and to dispose of property in their own name. But how can they dispose of property they do not possess, in the ownership of which they have no share whatever? Children also have come to feel that they should be consulted in the control and disposition of what they earn. They are willing as a rule to make their contribution to the maintenance of the family, but they are very firm in their conviction that they should have some voice in determining the amount that is necessary to meet their own needs from day to day and from week to week. This undoubtedly is one phase of the revolt of

children against the patriarchal and matriarchal, the autocratic type of family.

Autocratic programs are not in keeping with the new democratic form of organization of the family, nor are such programs the wisest. Another plan is for the wife as well as the husband to have a fund and for the children to have their own accounts. In some families this plan works out successfully, but in many it does not. The difficulty lies in distributing the income into different funds; and the disadvantage is that the different members of the family come to think of themselves as isolated individuals instead of as members of a family group. A better plan, it seems, is for the family to establish a family fund upon which each member is permitted to draw in accordance with his or her needs. Whether the wife works and earns money or not, she feels that she should share in the control and distribution of the funds of the family, for she is a part of the family and contributes her share toward family life by the work she does within the home. The children also feel that they should have a voice in shaping the economic program of the family of which they are a part. This plan of a family fund requires constant and close consultation between the different members of the family. This is what democracy means in family life—common counsel, joint responsibility, thoughtful and considerate cooperation between the members of the group whether it be large or small. The advantage of this plan of control of family funds is that it does train men and women in democratic procedures and democratic processes.

Certainly there are some things in household economy that men understand better than women and that women understand better than men. Men as a rule understand more about business methods, investments, and insurance; and women understand more about food, clothing,

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and house furnishing. But this is due not to the inability of men to understand the home or the inability of women to understand business; it is rather due to tradition, training, and experience. There is therefore no reason why the woman should not be instructed in the things that her husband understands better; nor is there any reason why the man should not learn what his wife knows about home affairs. They should undoubtedly prepare the budget together, and this means that they should agree upon the distribution of funds and upon expenditures. But how is it possible to do this unless they both understand all the items that enter into the budget itself? It is the duty of the husband to instruct his wife in those matters in which she has not been trained, and it is the duty of the wife to teach her husband what she knows about all those things that constitute good housekeeping. The wife often complains about the expenditures of the man because she does not understand them. And men often complain about the extravagance of women because men may not know anything about the cost or quality of food and clothing and furnishing.

Budget making is not always simple, and few young men and women have had any instruction in how to prepare a family budget, even for two. They should therefore be informed that the problem of budgets for different income groups has been carefully studied and that sample budgets have been outlined and prepared by experts and that these budget forms may be readily secured from accredited organizations. In the preparation of every budget two questions appear at the outset: what items should be included in the budget, and how much shall be allowed for each item? They must learn that a budget today includes many more items than were included in the budget a generation or two generations ago. What was regarded as a luxury by our grand-

parents was considered a convenience by our parents and is now termed a necessity by us. In other words, standards have changed. Food, rent, and clothing are elementary needs. Medical and dental care and insurance, we believe, are not only legitimate but necessary items. Education and recreation and dues and contributions to various organizations are also important and reasonable. But in addition to these items it may be necessary in many cases to include contributions toward the support of relatives or toward the education of brothers or sisters, and in some cases debts unfortunately must be entered as well. Young men and women feel a responsibility in these matters, and the sense of responsibility we must be careful not to discourage or impair.

The second question, how much should be set aside for each item in the budget, is more difficult to answer. Much depends upon the value the young man and the young woman place upon each item. Some young people will think more of their home and will want to set aside a larger proportion for rent and furnishing. It is no longer true that 25 per cent of the monthly income should be spent for rent. In some cases this is too little, and in some cases it may be too much. Some young people may think more of appearance and position and will want to set aside a larger sum for clothing and cosmetics and the beauty parlor. In some cases this interest in appearance and position may be nothing more than vanity, but in other cases it may arise out of a realization of what is necessary in a competitive social system. Men and women today must compete in appearance as well as in capacities. There are other young men and women who think more of pleasure and will want to set aside a larger sum for entertainment, motion pictures, and theaters. It is true that young people need relaxation and enjoyment in which they

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can share experiences with each other, but they must be careful not to go beyond their means in this matter. There are still others who think more of personal development and will want to set aside a larger sum for education, lectures, concerts, symphonies, and the opera. The degree to which they are able to do this must be determined not by their desire but by their income and resources.

Whatever the items included in the budget and the amount allowed for each, there is one thing against which every couple should be cautioned, and that is the snare of installment buying. The temptation to buy on the installment plan is very great, whether it be furniture or clothing, ornaments or radios or musical instruments, automobiles or jewelry, or even money in the form of loans. The desire to have what is wanted is strong, much stronger than foresight and wisdom. One serious objection is that the cost of things bought on the installment plan is always higher than the cost for cash. And the quality is often inferior. But more serious than this is the danger of debts that cannot be paid. Circumstances change, positions are lost, and business reverses come most unexpectedly. What seems stable and sure today may crash and crumble tomorrow. And nothing is more harassing and distressing to a young couple than the Damocles sword of debt. To restrain the desire for things is a good habit to cultivate. There is a certain joy in self-restraint, in saving patiently, in buying outright the things we want, in knowing that we are free. The only exception to this rule perhaps is the purchase of a home. In this case the home should be bought from an agency that can be trusted, an agency like the Government, and the monthly payments should not be greater than the amount which would be allowed for rent.

What training and experience do the young couple have in the field of home economics? This is a question they do not always ask themselves, nor do they realize how significant it may become in their married life. They cannot foresee that many misunderstandings may develop largely as a result of ignorance in the management of the home and in homemaking. It is true that in some high schools and in most colleges courses are now given in housekeeping and homemaking, but not many young people seem to have availed themselves of the program that is offered. The result is that young women are utterly untrained and inexperienced in even the simplest home duties. And the young men are equally unaware of what a home requires and of the way in which a home must be maintained. This lack of training, this inexperience, leads not only to mismanagement; it leads to the mispending of funds and often to arguments and accusations. The least we can do is to urge young men and women who are unacquainted with home economics to equip themselves as rapidly as possible, to acquire the knowledge that is necessary in order to make their home and their home life a source of sustainment and comfort and joy. We ourselves must know where to send them and how they can accomplish what we recommend. We must therefore have on file a list of courses, books, pamphlets, and magazines in the field of home economics.

It is not only surprising but discouraging to discover how uninformed young men and women are, how little even those who plan to be married know about the elementary facts of food, clothing, and house furnishing. In spite of all that is written and said on the subject they are unacquainted with even the elements of nutrition. They are ignorant of what the human body needs and how the needs must be met. Calories and vitamins are essential,

and so are the other elements that enter into the building up of the muscle, the bone, the blood, and the nervous system. But what foods contain the material that is needed at different age levels? This is what young people must learn, and they must also learn the surprising fact that the most expensive foods do not always contain most of what the body needs or as much as the foods that cost less. Where can these foods be purchased with the greatest safety and at the most reasonable prices? It is also necessary to know how these foods should be prepared and how they should be served. What effect has cooking, frying, baking, or broiling upon the foods that are bought? These interesting and important matters can be learned from experts today. There is, then, no excuse for lack of training or for inexperience. If the young woman and the young man have not learned how to buy and to prepare food in their own homes or in courses that they have taken, they should at least agree that they will not secure their experience at the expense of each other.

The same thing is true of clothing and home equipment. Some men and women have natural taste and style and a gift for discovering and recognizing quality. But most of us are at the mercy of merchants and magazine writers and radio commercials. The most widely advertised brands are not always the best or the cheapest. It is not difficult for young people to learn about fabrics and furnishings. Instruction in these matters is also offered in various centers. Some fabrics, they will discover, look nice, and some wear well, and some do both. The dress or suit that makes one person look attractive may not become another person at all. The whole appearance of a woman can be changed with a simple change in the arrangement of her hair. This does not mean, however, that the woman should spend an excessive part of her

time in practicing the cosmetic cult or that she should apparel herself in costumes that are designed for women with different figures. Nor does it mean that a man should attire himself in suits never cut to his measure or should assume ornaments that are out of place and that only expose his lack of good taste. For most people the simplest styles are the most becoming, and the simplest styles are not the most expensive. This young men and women must not forget; otherwise, they will be deceived by advertisements that add to the cost but not to the quality of merchandise.

In equipping their home many young people, even most, reveal an amazing innocence of what is needed and where to buy. It is easy to forgive the mixture of styles and periods; but it is difficult to excuse the lack of understanding of what the modern kitchen and dining room and bedroom and bathroom and living room should contain. Many changes and improvements in household equipment have come within the last fifty years, changes and improvements that not only decrease drudgery and worry but that also add to comfort and beauty. We should urge young people to study the equipment of each part of the house carefully in company with someone who knows. Many stores now have a staff of advisers who will gladly cooperate with young people. The important thing is first to select utensils and furnishings that are essential and most serviceable. To these the couple may add whatever they desire and can afford. Many rooms are crowded with things that are not needed and that only complicate the burden of home-keeping and distract from the appearance of the place. Men and women are inclined to accumulate household effects. They do not like to discard what they possess, for a number of reasons. But it is a good habit to learn how to simplify life. We



can travel farther and we can travel faster without the burdens of useless cargo.

The subject of home economics is of major importance today, for the home itself is in grave danger. A number of students of marriage and family life have been as greatly concerned over the decline of the home as they have been about the disintegration of the family and the dissolution of marriage. Many things that were once done inside the home are now done outside—the baking of bread and pastry, the sewing of clothes and household linen, the washing and ironing, and the cleaning of carpets. In other words, the home has ceased to be a center of family activity and the meeting of family needs. In addition to the fact that work formerly done inside the home is now done outside, the home has suffered because of the many distractions that take men and women and young people and even children to other places for entertainment, for pleasure, and for social contacts. There was a time when men and women gathered in homes and there entertained each other and built up social relationships. But restaurants, the motion picture, the theater, the dance hall now draw men and women away from their homes, and the result is that the home no longer serves as a center of family life. It may be that the contraction of the home in size is in part responsible for the loss that the home has suffered in interest and prestige. The part the size of the home plays, however, is unimportant compared with other factors, tangible and intangible.

Recently a change seems to be taking place. For several reasons a movement back to the home seems to be growing in strength and favor. The radio, electrical appliances, new and simpler and more attractive types of furniture and decorations are reawakening a new interest in the home as a center of activity and entertainment.

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Those of us who have the privilege of counseling men and women, especially those about to be married, should do our utmost to encourage this movement. For unless men and women learn to live together in a home, they cannot hope to build up a strong texture of family life and an abiding spirit of family relationships. It is not enough for men and women merely to meet in the home from time to time; people do not come to know and interest themselves in each other in this way. The truth is that today men and women know their associates in business better than they know the members of their own family. In business, men and women spend hours with each other discussing common problems and common interests; they lunch together, and they work together. If they are to develop a form of family life that will mean mutual interest, comradeship, enriched personalities, it is necessary that they establish a home in which the family can live together in a family spirit. The right kind of family life, it is evident, requires the right kind of home in which to develop.

## CHAPTER 5

### BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

In a discussion of the biological foundations of marriage the simplest and most natural approach is through the question, "Have you had your blood test?" Most states now require a blood test for either syphilis or gonorrhea or both; but even in the states that do not require this test the question is pertinent, since most young men and women now realize the wisdom of this procedure. Whether they have had the test made or plan to have this done in the near future, we should explain to them that, while the blood test is important, it is only the beginning of a larger program that is now being developed and adopted. As a rule, young men and women are too inexperienced to realize the degree to which biological weaknesses and defects may interfere with happiness in marriage. It is important for young people to know that they are free of venereal disease, and it is equally important to know that they are free of other physical conditions that may hamper marriage and handicap them in their married life. All the studies that have been made on the biological level of marriage prove that many misunderstandings and much misery result from physical, emotional, and mental conditions of which the young people may be in the beginning unaware or to which they attach little significance.

The only way in which the young man and the young woman can discover their weaknesses or defects is through a complete and thorough examination by a competent physician. This is what we are now accus-

tomed to urge upon all young people who plan to marry. Some young men and some young women may appear a little reluctant to undergo an examination; the reasons for their reluctance may not be clear to them, or they may not wish to disclose the reasons to us. But not many young people will resent this counsel or refuse to accept it. For they know that candidates for teaching and other professions cannot today secure a license without passing a health examination. And they also know that many corporations now require a careful examination of those who enter their employ, especially in an executive post. In fact, as a result of the movement of health education conducted during the last few decades most young people have come to understand the meaning of health, and many today arrange to have themselves examined at least once a year. The health examination, in other words, is rapidly becoming a matter of social practice. The couple, however, may not know which disease and which defects should prohibit their marriage and which weaknesses and which impairments should give them pause in planning their married life.

Most states have passed a law that requires a blood test of those who apply for a marriage license. These states will not issue a marriage license to a man or woman unless a certificate is presented showing that the man and the woman are free of syphilis in a communicable stage. This legislation has been passed because we now realize the danger of syphilis not only to the man and the woman but also to the children who may be born of the marriage. No man or woman today wants to infect another person with syphilis, and certainly no father or mother wants to communicate this grave disease to his or her child. But the only way to be sure of freedom from the disease is by submitting to the blood test. For the poison may lie latent in the body without revealing

itself in any outward symptom. In case the blood test is positive, that is, if it shows the presence of syphilis, the man or the woman should be counseled to submit to treatment immediately and under no circumstances to attempt to marry in some state that does not require a blood test. This may seem an unnecessary caution, but some young people are so impetuous and so reckless in their desire to marry that they are ready to disregard all medical counsel and to follow their own uninstructed and undisciplined impulses.

Syphilis is not the only venereal disease that should prohibit marriage. In some states other venereal diseases like gonorrhea also are outlawed. Gonorrhea is a very prevalent infection of the genital organs and like syphilis may be contracted innocently. It is so easily communicated and leads to so much suffering and so much unhappiness that no one should think of this infection lightly. Unfortunately, young men particularly up to a short time ago did not consider gonorrhea a serious matter. We now know that it is very serious and that it is better to wait until the disease has yielded to the new forms of treatment that are now employed. There is no reason why young men and young women should not wait until they are cured of this disease. The new methods of treatment now being developed promise complete control and recovery within a reasonable time, even within two or three weeks or less. It is necessary, however, that those who are infected with gonorrhea be treated by physicians who are experts in this field, by those who understand the newer forms of medication and the new techniques that are employed. Otherwise, the treatment may be prolonged for months, and even after the treatment the infection may flare up again. Unfortunately, there are men in the medical profession who, besides being incompetent in the treatment of gonorrhea,

are unconscientious in their methods of medication. To be perfectly frank, charlatans not infrequently take advantage of men and women who suffer with this disease.

Are there any other diseases that should prohibit marriage? There are indeed a number. For example, tuberculosis in an active stage is one. If a man or woman has a tuberculous lesion that is active, the disease can quickly communicate itself to another person, and it will also communicate itself to the children if they are in contact with the infected parent. Men and women who suffer with tuberculosis in an active stage should wait until they have reached the arrested stage of their treatment. And even then they should not marry without the consent of a physician and certainly not without making the condition known to the other party to the contract. There is no law at present that prohibits men and women with tuberculosis from marrying, and some young people say that they are so much in love with each other that they are willing to take the risk that is involved. But the risk for both the infected person and the other, man or woman, is so great that every effort should be made to discourage the marriage. Even when the lesion has been healed, the danger of recurrence must always be borne in mind by both the young man and the young woman. This is especially true if the young woman becomes pregnant. And it is also true in the case of men whose work may prove to be an overstrain. There is no doubt that marriage adds burdens which the tuberculous though healed may be unable to bear.

The same prohibition and the same caution should be issued and observed in the case of Bright's disease. This disease of the kidney in its acute form is not communicable, but it does incapacitate men and women for marriage. The difficulty and the danger is that the person

afflicted may not know that he or she suffers with Bright's disease; and many do not know the hazards involved, especially for the woman. The strain of married life and the stress incidental to pregnancy is so great that no woman with acute Bright's disease should assume the risk. The outcome in almost every case is fatal. In some cases the person afflicted may survive for a year or two or more, but usually in a state of ill health or invalidism. In other cases life may be very limited. One young couple visited a physician in order to be examined before their marriage. They had already selected and furnished their apartment and planned to be married within two or three weeks. The physician at once discovered that the man suffered with a condition so far advanced that he could not possibly live more than a few months. Bright's disease is only one of a number of equally dangerous conditions that the doctor may discover. The only way to assure oneself that he or she is free of these physical diseases is to submit to a careful examination and to have the examination not as late but as early as possible.

There is another group of diseases that do not prohibit marriage but that do involve risks of which the young people should be aware. Heart disease is a general term that covers many cardiac conditions some of which are acute, such as endocarditis, and some of which are chronic, such as a defect in one of the valves. In all these cases both the man and the woman should know the facts and the dangers that are involved. A woman with a chronic heart condition may be permitted to marry but should not undertake the strain of pregnancy without the advice of a competent physician. Thyroid and other glandular disturbances do not prohibit marriage, but they may seriously interfere with married life and may serve as a distressing handicap. It is true that as a result

of the advance in an understanding of the endocrine system many glandular conditions can be corrected or at least improved. The treatment, however, may extend over a long period of time, and even then there may be no assurance of a restoration to a completely normal life. Marriage and family responsibilities often bring burdens that prove too great a strain for men and women with glandular weaknesses or disease. If the young man and the young woman are willing to assume the risks, they must be permitted to do so, but they must understand in advance all that the risks involve. These risks may include not only illness and invalidism but tensions and conflicts in marriage relationships.

Another condition that should be considered, strange as it may seem, is the anatomical structure of both the man and the woman. Physical deformity is not necessarily a bar to marriage, but there are some men and women who find it impossible to reconcile themselves to what is abnormal. They cannot, for example, accept in another even so minor an imperfection as defective hearing. The fact that the husband or the wife is hard of hearing and must wear an apparatus is a constant source of annoyance and embarrassment to them. There are other deformities that are more serious. If a woman is in any manner malformed, this should be made known to the man. If, for instance, a woman is so constructed that she cannot give birth to a child without a Caesarean operation, both the man and the woman should know this fact and should be guided by a physician in the conduct of their married life. If the man is in any manner malformed, this should be made known to the woman before marriage. Women are sometimes shocked to discover a deformity of which they had never been told and that they had no reason even to suspect. Some women, we have found, are so sensitive in these matters



that they are unnerved when they see the scars that come from a serious operation. There are others to whom physical imperfections and abnormalities such as a crippled hand or a clubfoot or a crooked back make no great difference. These men and women are more concerned with the inward life of others than with the outward appearance.

The complete medical examination should include more than the physical condition of the man and the woman. It should include also the mental and emotional areas of their life. We must remember too that men and women are not always aware of their own mental and emotional health. On the contrary, many are not. The mental hygiene movement is still very young, and men and women have not learned to recognize their own symptoms. Many believe that they are perfectly normal and healthy when in truth they are suffering with mental and emotional disturbances that may become a source of much difficulty in their married life. The general practitioner in medicine is not necessarily a psychologist or psychiatrist or psychoanalyst; but most men trained in modern medicine, with some years of experience in treating men and women, are able to detect deviations and defects in the mental and emotional make-up of their patients. The Marriage Law, it is true, does prohibit the marriage of the insane and in some states the marriage of the epileptic. But the state does not question the affidavit of the applicant. In only one state, the state of Oregon, is an examination required to determine the presence of insanity and epilepsy. And even in this state there is some disagreement as to what constitutes epilepsy and insanity, that is, according to the law. Whether this law can be enforced is still a matter of doubt.

Everyone agrees that the insane should not marry, and still many insane do secure licenses and do marry

during their lucid intervals or when the acute mental condition has subsided into a mild stage. This has happened in many cases on record; and the number is certainly large enough to advise caution. In some instances the men and women do not realize the dangers involved; they seem to think that insanity is no impediment to marriage. Others are fully aware of the dangers, but for a strange and altogether unscientific reason they think that marriage will serve as a cure. This superstition is current among a number of social groups. It may be that such a marriage could be annulled on the ground of fraud, but it is much wiser to prevent the marriage from ever taking place. The only way in which to anticipate and forestall these tragic unions is to inquire carefully into the psychical history of each person. The same procedure should be adopted wherever there is a suspicion of epilepsy. Not much is known about this disease, but we do know that it is not uncommon and that it seriously affects married life. The difficulty in cases of epilepsy is that the attacks may come at long intervals and may be of short duration. And the danger is that both the afflicted person and the other party may not appreciate the menace that epilepsy may become to their marriage. The least we can do in these cases is to caution the men and women who come to us. If they are so deeply in love with each other that they are willing to marry in spite of the risks, we cannot forbid them. But they should not marry in ignorance of the facts.

In addition to mental defects and diseases there are also emotional conditions and disturbances that must be considered in the matter of marriage. These conditions and disturbances do not necessarily prohibit marriage, but they may and often do make marriage exceedingly difficult. For example, some men and women never seem

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to achieve emotional maturity. This is a very important fact to remember in marriage counseling. The studies of personality show that human beings do not grow up and develop at the same pace in every area and aspect of their life. At the age of twenty-five a man or woman may be physically mature but mentally may be far in advance of his or her age and emotionally may be still in the adolescent or even in the childhood stage. In these stages of emotional immaturity they are utterly unable to understand problems as a mature person can, and they certainly are unable to cope adequately with the problems that marriage and family life always bring. In some cases of this type it is possible to assist the person to mature himself or herself through a process of education and discipline. Who should undertake this program of education and discipline is a matter that the counselor and the client must decide together. But there are other cases in which nothing can be done. These men and women have a limited emotional growth as others have a limited mental growth. In these cases we are compelled to reconcile ourselves to the limitations.

The cases of genuine emotional disturbance and instability are more serious. These conditions lead to spasmodic outbreaks and episodes that cause dissension and intense unhappiness. It is very difficult for a counselor in the course of a few interviews to discover cases of this character. It is for this reason that it is necessary to study the history of every young man and every young woman in which there is any evidence of emotional disturbances. The most advisable thing to do is to urge the young man or the young woman to consult a psychiatrist. A psychiatrist with his training and experience and technique in this field will be able to determine how serious the disturbance is. No matter what the

psychiatrist discovers, the facts in every case must be made known to the other party to the contract. It is most unfair to allow a young man to believe that he is marrying an emotionally normal young woman when the facts reveal abnormalities that may and probably will make marriage exceedingly difficult. And it is equally unfair to allow a young woman to marry a young man in the belief that he is perfectly normal in his emotional development when the examination discloses defects that will gravely mar married life. If after the facts are made known the young people decide to take the risk, there is nothing that the counselor can do, but the decision must rest with them.

In addition to mental and emotional immaturities and disturbances there may be other deviations that are less obvious but that are none the less real. Mis-education, suppressed impulses, thwarted desires in either the young man or the young woman or both may result in wrong ideas concerning sex and marriage or may lead to attachments that will make it difficult to enter into a full and complete marriage relationship. Some young men are so deeply and so irrevocably attached to their mothers that they can never disengage themselves sufficiently to become husbands. And some young women are so deeply and so peculiarly attached to their fathers or to the family as a whole that they can never emancipate themselves completely enough to become wives. These attitudes need to be discovered and corrected in order that marriage may be properly consummated and developed. In some cases, of course, the difficulty is not with the young man or the young woman but with one or the other or both parents. There are parents who cannot readily think of their son as a husband or of their daughter as a wife. In other words, they cannot reconcile themselves to the new status that

their child or children must assume. In extreme instances this feeling may be so intense that it is almost impossible for the mother or father or both to surrender the son or daughter. In these cases it is the parent that must be referred to the psychiatrist in order that the young people may be emancipated and permitted to develop their married life with personal freedom.

The subject of sex hygiene is one in which the couple is undoubtedly interested and about which they are probably eager to learn much. Many young people are utterly ignorant of the elements of the subject and many are misguided because of the sensational lectures they have heard or the type of pamphlets or books they have read. It is safest to assume that they know little that is accurate in the field of sex hygiene and to begin at the beginning. They must learn at least the elements of human anatomy and physiology, that is, the structure and functionings of the human body, both male and female. They must learn at least the elements of the reproductive system in both the man and the woman and something of the miraculous manner in which the reproductive system functions. They must learn as much as we now know of the art of marital association and all that this implies. Students in college take courses in hygiene and physiology and marriage and family life and in this way acquire the knowledge that they should possess. But not all colleges offer these courses, and not all students take the courses at the college in which they are offered. And it must not be forgotten that only a limited number of young men and women enter the college groups, and that the great majority of young people are therefore without the instruction and guidance that some colleges give. In some manner the knowledge that is now possessed by the few must be extended to all who marry.

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Young people should be informed of the misunderstandings and discords in marriage that are due entirely to ignorance or misinformation in the matter of sex hygiene. Some young men and women, for example, do not know that physical fatigue, emotional weariness, mental exhaustion may affect the sexual life of men and women. They may therefore misinterpret each other's attitude and as a result may reach wrong conclusions. The man may come to think that his wife is not in love with him merely because she does not respond sexually as actively as he thinks she should. And many a woman wonders what is wrong with her when her husband complains of her own lack of response and her passivity. Some young men and women also may enter upon marriage without knowing the elementary fact that there is a marked difference between the sexual life of the man and the sexual life of the woman, a difference in time, in tone, and in tension. They do not understand what is well known to every student of sex life and psychology, that it requires weeks and sometimes months for these two persons, the husband and the wife, to accommodate themselves to each other on the primary sexual level, though they do understand that it often takes months and years for two people to adjust themselves to each other on other levels of life. They do not always express their feelings to each other, nor do they always explain their attitude to each other, but the feelings and the attitudes nevertheless deeply affect and condition their relationship.

One thing that the woman should learn is that the wife must share actively in the love life of marriage. Some women still seem to think that they must remain passive. This attitude may be due to the feeling that it is immodest for a woman to express her own emotions and desires. At one time this was the conventional con-

ception and probably dates back to the time when women still occupied a subordinate status in social organization, to the time when they were not considered to possess a personality of their own. Or the attitude may be due to the religious teaching that all desires of the flesh must be subdued and even extinguished. This teaching for centuries influenced women more deeply than men, and young women grew up with the feeling that it was not only immodest but immoral for them to entertain thoughts of sex and to acknowledge sex impulses. These attitudes have become obsolete, for it is now recognized that they lead to a lack of fulfillment in marriage. Worse than this, these attitudes may lead to indifference, to distaste, and even to antagonism. It is not necessary for women to become aggressive in their sex life, but it is necessary for them to express in a normal manner the impulses that are natural to every human being. Any attempt to suppress these impulses will lead to inward dissatisfactions and outward dissension, to a feeling of frustration instead of a feeling of fulfillment and harmony.

The man, on the other hand, also needs to learn a number of things. He needs to learn to be patient, to be considerate, to be tender, to be delicate in the approach to his wife. Men too often bring into their marriage the undisciplined impulses, the crude manners, even the perversions that they have learned from women of the street. A woman wants to be wooed, and even a wife must be wooed in order to be won. This men must learn: The wooing of the wife is not limited to the honeymoon but must continue throughout the years of marriage. In other words, the husband must learn to study his wife, to understand her moods, and to respect her own feelings. He must remember that the sexual life in women as a rule is less urgent than in men, that the rhythms in

the sexual life of women are much more clearly marked than in men, that sexual lassitude is not necessarily an indication that love itself has lapsed. But most of all he must come to understand that the love a woman feels for a man is larger than the sexual element, that the sexual element often constitutes only a segment of the whole. It is well to learn all these things before marriage in order to escape the dangers of unwise and even unwarranted conduct. For it happens not infrequently that a woman is pained and shocked and alienated by the thoughtless, inconsiderate, and exacting demands of her husband.

Another subject about which young people who plan to be married are seriously concerned is contraception. In the vast majority of instances young men and young women know little on this subject that is authoritative. One thing that they should be told is that it is most unwise to rely upon the advice of relatives or friends or drugstores in a matter that is so important to their health. Relatives and friends unfortunately are themselves uninformed, and drugstores and other centers of distribution of contraceptive material are incompetent to give the information that is necessary. All the studies that have been made and the research that is now being conducted prove clearly the need for caution in the matter of contraception. Some methods, we know, are dangerous, especially to the woman. Some methods are altogether unreliable, and there is no method that is absolutely safe and certain. What young people need, in fact, is not only information but instruction. Couples differ, and young women especially differ from each other. Each young woman and each couple should be interviewed and examined in order to determine the best method. Only after an examination can they be instructed in the proper way in which to practice con-



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trapection. The proper person to whom to go for examination and instruction is, of course, the physician, but strangely enough not all physicians have studied the subject of contraception scientifically, and not all are acquainted with the latest results of research and the newer techniques. It is therefore advisable to direct young people to only those we know to be expert. As a rule, the best men and women are the gynecologists and the obstetricians and others who have made special studies of contraception.

Another thing that the couple should learn is that contraception is a method of controlling and regulating the birth rate of children and is not designed to prevent the coming of children in all cases. The birth of children depends, they must understand, upon a number of things. The first and perhaps the fundamental factor is the *desire to have children*. In most women the maternal instinct is so strong and in most men the paternal instinct is so marked that they want children, certainly after the first or second year. Couples come to feel that their lives are incomplete without children and that children consummate the marriage. In some men and women, however, strange as it may seem, the parental instinct is weak, and the desire for children does not awaken throughout their lives. If a couple do not want children, it is much better that children be not born to them. Nothing is more undesirable than an undesired child. The child throughout its life will feel the attitude of its parents, and this feeling will express itself in the conduct of the child. This group of men and women, it should be emphasized, must not be confused with another group, that is, with a group of men and women in whom the desire for children is merely dormant. These men and women need to be encouraged to have children. Once a child comes to them, their parental feelings flower further

and deepen their life and enrich their relationship. This group is larger today than many realize, and for many reasons both economic and psychological they begin by thinking of their marriage as a companionship and in time discover its wider and profounder implications.

The second thing that should determine the number of children is the *health of the parents* and especially of the mother. In every case the woman should take the precaution of consulting her physician to be sure that she is in condition to undertake the task of bearing and rearing a child, and it is also wise for the husband to be examined in order to be sure that his condition would in no way endanger the child that he plans to bring into the world. A woman's health may be seriously endangered by the long period of pregnancy. This is especially true in the cases of women who suffer with defects or weaknesses or impairments whether they be physical or emotional or mental. Pregnancy is always a drain upon the strength of a woman, and it is important to know that her strength is sufficient to permit her to support both herself and the child that develops within her. Even healthy women have come to understand that too many and too frequent confinements are a danger. The health of women is undermined when children come at too frequent intervals and when too many are born of the same mother. It is therefore necessary for women to learn how to space their children intelligently and also when to stop. In reaching a decision in these matters it is necessary for women to have the instruction and guidance of a physician who will base his counsel upon a full and complete examination of both the man and the woman.

The third thing that young people must consider is the *ability of the couple to rear children* as children should be reared today. The health, the education, the develop-

ment of children in our time we understand much better than we did fifty or forty or thirty or even twenty years ago. We realize now that children require careful study and intelligent supervision if they are to grow into strong and competent men and women. It has been definitely established that in families with a large number of children both the sickness rate and the death rate are higher than in families with two or three children. The decline in infant and child mortality and the reduction in childhood illnesses are due in large part to small families and to the care that can now be given to the limited number of children. Education, however, is just as important as health, and education in these days demands time and thought and resources. Few men and women have resources so great and time so generous that it is possible for them to assist more than a limited number of children to develop their personalities and their capacities adequately. Each couple must determine for themselves how many children they can assure the assistance, the guidance, the supervision that will establish children as independent and self-sustaining individuals. They must not forget that the child is a contribution to social life and that the contribution they are to make should be an asset and not a liability.

The fourth thing that should be considered in the birth of children is the *social need of the time*. There are times when it seems unwise to bring children into the world, and this is recognized by intelligent parents everywhere. In a time of economic depression and widespread unemployment, in a time of exploitation and persecution, in a time when the world is devastated by war, famine, and plague, it is unwise to bring children into the world. Students of population are not agreed upon the number of men, women, and children that constitute the most desirable population level. But this

is certain: There is no social wisdom in increasing the population by 150 children when conditions are such that only 100 can be adequately maintained in health and decency. A study of vital statistics proves beyond question that in progressive countries men and women understand this matter of social need. In periods of depression the birth rate declines, and in periods of prosperity the birth rate rises. But these social trends have not yet become as conscious and as intelligent as the future demands. The underpopulation in some sections of the world and the overpopulation in others are a proof of this. It is undoubtedly true that the productive power of society is increasing, but it is also true that the need for man power in normal times is decreasing as the result of the increase in the use of machinery and the employment of scientific methods of production and distribution.

Who should give instruction in sex hygiene and contraception? Is it necessary to go to a physician for this information and instruction? There is no doubt that the physician, the gynecologist, or the obstetrician is far more competent than a layman to discuss the matter of contraception with young people and to give them the instruction they need without embarrassment. Physicians as a rule have diagrams and models in their office which they can employ in the course of their discussion and instruction. These diagrams and models lift the whole subject of contraception to a scientific level and relieve the young people of the hesitations and embarrassments that hinder discussions with a layman. The methods of contraception and instruction in the employment of the different methods therefore should be left to the expert. But birth control or planned parenthood involves something more than contraceptive instruction. There are a number of reasons for having or

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not having or for postponing children, and these reasons it is altogether proper for a couple to discuss with one who is not a physician. For example, the couple may be concerned about the economic, the psychological, the moral reasons for or against contraception. The arguments for and against should be discussed with them and can be discussed by a marriage counselor who has studied the subject. He will be able especially to answer the arguments that birth control is contrary to the law, a degradation of marriage, and a violation of the will of God. And he will be able to prove that a program that saves the life of children, preserves the health of mothers, and advances social welfare is altogether moral both in principle and in purpose.

Instruction in sex hygiene is a more difficult problem. The physician undoubtedly knows more about the anatomy and physiology and pathology of the reproductive system than does a layman. And it is wise and proper that these topics be discussed with a physician or with a teacher of physiology and hygiene. But sex hygiene is much more than a matter of structure and functioning and diseases of the reproductive system. Even more than contraception sex hygiene has economic, psychological, and ethical aspects and implications. And the danger is that if the subject is left entirely to a physician, only the physical aspects will be presented and other facts and implications will be slighted or ignored altogether. This would be most unfortunate, for both the young man and the young woman should be prepared for marriage and marital association in more than a knowledge of the physical facts. They must be psychologically prepared as well. This means that they must learn how to approach each other without a misunderstanding of sex that so often results in restraints and fears. And they must also be prepared ethically.

This means that they must learn to observe the standards, the principles, the ideals of married life. For unless they do observe these standards, principles, and ideals even in the most intimate association of marriage, their marriage will lose something that is very precious and something that is essential to happiness and to a sustained and permanent relationship.

More often than many think, the question of heredity and eugenics will arise in the course of the discussion. The couple will tell us that there is a strain of insanity in one or the other family. Should the man and woman marry, and should the couple have children? They may tell us that diabetes runs as a taint in one or the other family. Is it wise for a person with such a family history to marry, and should the couple have children? Or they may tell us that in one family several members have been afflicted with one form of nervous disorder or another. The young woman, however, seems to be perfectly normal. Should she marry, and should the couple have children? Heredity is a subject about which the counselor must be very cautious. Even the ablest students of eugenics and human heredity are not prepared in our stage of knowledge to answer these questions without qualification. There are some physical and psychical characteristics that are transmissible, that descend from one generation to another, sometimes in weakened form, sometimes with increased intensity. In some cases the characteristics may skip a generation; in some cases the characteristics may appear in one-fourth of the children born and in some cases in one-half. Heredity is so complicated a subject and the factors are so difficult to determine with scientific certainty that it seems best to allow these questions to be considered and answered by an expert.

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Two points, it seems, should be stressed in the discussion of heredity and eugenics. One point is this: Eugenics recognizes today that environment and education play a larger part in the development of individuals and families and the race than was conceded a generation ago. The human protoplasm and the psychical constitution of men and women are not relentlessly rigid. Both change, and both can be modified and improved. It is true that new soil, new climate, new sunshine cannot convert a thistle into a rosebush and that no environment or educational program can transform a mentally defective child into a normal man or woman. But soil and climate and sunshine can greatly improve and develop the rose, and well-planned educational procedures and the proper environment can do much to improve and develop human beings and racial groups. There is evidence to support the claim that we can outgrow to a great degree trends formerly regarded as indelible and that we can also outgrow taints regarded as ineradicable many years back. Human beings, in other words, are not inflexible; human nature can and does change. The eugenic outlook today is therefore much more encouraging than it was a generation or two generations ago. Even the so-called intelligence quotient, it is now recognized, can be raised or lowered. The improvement in nutrition, in educational procedures, and in social environment now made possible by a new economy is unquestionably raising the level of intelligence in social groups.

The second point to stress is that the decision in all these matters must rest with the couple themselves. The counselor cannot assume the responsibility. All that we can do is to put them in possession of the best information that is available and to give them such

cautions as seem to us wise. They and not we must decide whether they are to assume the risk, be it great or small. They and not we must decide whether they are to have children, one or more. The fact that two people agree to marry does not necessarily mean that they must have children at all. There are many couples that marry and agree in advance that because of background and family history it would be wiser not to have a child. The man and the woman in these cases at least have each other and marry to enjoy each other's comradeship. This, in fact, is the general rule that we must observe not only in regard to heredity and eugenics but in regard to contraception and physical and emotional and mental weaknesses and defects. We must not assume to decide for young people. We are counselors and not arbitrators or dictators. It is our duty to present the facts as we discover them, to discuss the problems as they appear to us, and then to allow the young people to make their own decisions. The important thing is that the decision be intelligent and based upon a knowledge of the facts and all their implications.



## CHAPTER 6

### PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

The young men and women who come for counsel appreciate to some degree the legal, economic, and biological aspects of marriage. These are subjects that have come within the range of their experience and that they are able to understand. But not all young people realize today the importance of the psychological factors in marriage. They are interested to some extent in psychology, and they have at least a verbal acquaintance with mental hygiene, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis. But they do not know that psychological differences and discrepancies and defects may seriously interfere with their marriage and mar their happiness. It is therefore necessary for the counselor to tell them something of the studies that are now being made in the social and psychological laboratories, the studies, that is, of marriage and family life upon the psychological level. These studies, they must be told, prove beyond question that cultural backgrounds, forms of education, group prejudices and preferences—all the elements that enter into the psychological constitution of each individual—play a vital role in determining marriage relationships. Not infrequently it happens that young people enter upon marriage on the legal or economic or biological level when they are psychologically utterly unsuited to each other. The inevitable result is that when they outgrow the legal contract, the economic enterprise, the biological attractions and allurements, the very basis on which their

marriage was built disappears and the marriage itself is doomed.

The simplest approach to the psychological aspect of marriage and to the discussion of psychological factors lies through the simple and apparently irrelevant question, "Where did you two young people meet, and how did the meeting come about?" As a rule the young people are glad to recall their first meeting and to tell just what occurred. Their first meeting is always interesting and exciting to them, and to the counselor it is informative and revealing. As they speak of their experience, colored as it must be by their later associations, it is not difficult to discover on what level the courtship has been conducted and in what spirit the relationship has been developed. In their words, in their manner, in their attitude toward each other, in the way in which they react to each other's presence and statements we can detect the answers to the questions that are in our own mind. "Are these two young people temperamentally suited to each other?" "Have they interests in common that they will be able to cultivate?" "Have they reached emotional and mental maturity?" "Are they near enough to each other in their development to be able to speak to each other in a common language?" "Have they established an association and intimacy of mind as well as of heart?" These questions may not have taken shape in their own thinking and it is necessary for us as counselors not only to formulate the questions for them but to assist them to uncover the answers, the answers that lie within their own personalities, and the interplay of psychological factors as they meet and part from day to day, as they converse with each other, as they work together, as they plan out their future, their married life.

The meeting of the young people may have taken place anywhere. They may meet in the elevator of the apart-

ment house in which they live, in the office in which they both work, in the home of a friend that they both visit, on the campus of the college that they both attend, in the hotel or summer camp to which they both go for a vacation period, or they may meet at some conference or convention or social affair. Sometimes young people meet in the most casual manner, and out of this meeting grows an acquaintanceship, and out of the acquaintanceship a deeper interest and affection develops. In other instances the two young people may feel deeply interested and attracted to each other from the moment they first meet. They may be drawn together by a force that they themselves do not understand. They may even realize without a word being spoken, with nothing more than a glance of the eye, that they respond to each other on a high level, and they may even feel as a result that they actually belong together and to each other. Sometimes the first meeting is anything but casual. Not infrequently the meeting is arranged by friends who are interested in bringing two young people together, or it may be arranged by parents through a professional marriage broker. These are the cases in which it is necessary to be exceedingly cautious. In other words, the meeting of two young people may be arranged from the outset, or it may be altogether accidental, or it may have all the color and warmth and beauty of romance.

The next question naturally is, "How long have you known each other and how well?" If they have known each other only a short time, only a few months, only a few weeks, as often happens, or even only a few days, as happens occasionally during periods of crisis, it seems to be the duty of the counselor to caution them against an ill-considered or a hurried or a hasty marriage. In some states unfortunately it is still possible to secure a marriage license at one window and to be married a

few moments later at the next. Other states require an interval of three or five days between the time the couple applies for the marriage license and the time when the ceremony may be performed. This short interval is designed to prevent the hasty and impetuous marriage. But the interval is not long enough to assure anyone that the two young people know each other as long or as well as they should. The Marriage Law, in other words, does not give us any reason for believing that young people have thoughtfully and earnestly considered all that marriage means and the foundations on which it must rest. How long two young people should know each other before they should marry may be debatable. It is perhaps difficult to fix a time limit for all cases. So much depends on background, the form of association, the type of individual, and the maturity of the young man and the young woman. But even in the most favorable environment and with the most fortunate factors present it seems that two young people should know each other at least three months before they become engaged and that they should be engaged at least three months more before they marry.

How well do two young people know each other? The answer to this question does not depend upon the length of time. Some people know each other for months and years and never learn much about each other. Two people who work in the same office, attend the same church or synagogue, belong to the same fraternal organization, or study in the same college may know only a small segment of the life of each other. One may know only that small segment of the whole circle of life that the other chooses to reveal. The truth is that most young men and women reveal to each other only that part which they think will prove most interesting and attractive. In other words, they meet on parade. Perhaps it would not be an

overstatement to say that as a rule we see and know not more than 45 degrees or one-eighth of the 360 degrees of which the whole circle is composed. Most of us suppress and conceal a large part of ourselves. Some men and women do this for no other reason than that they want to appear interesting and attractive. Others do this because they wish deliberately to hide that part of themselves that they believe would prejudice others against them and especially interfere with prospects of courtship or marriage. This is a species of deception not always easy to detect. Young men and women because of their limited experience and emotional involvements are unable to see these things clearly and to see them whole. It is for this reason that they need counsel and guidance. Only men and women with rare insight have the great gift of seeing the whole circle of another's life from the circumference to the center.

But it is the whole and not a part of the person that enters into marriage, the whole of the man and the whole of the woman. Marriage, we must remember, is not merely a union of two persons; it is a mating of two personalities, and personalities are complex and complicated entities. How can two people know what they should about each other before they marry? How can they know enough about each other's personality to be sure that they understand each other fully? It may be that this is impossible for most young people. It may be that most young men and women are too limited in knowledge and that life is too short for most of them to learn what they should know. But if the association of two young people is constant and close and if it is of the right tone and content and character, if the experience is upon the right level, it is possible for two people to learn enough about each other to save them from making the mistake of marrying on the basis of a knowledge so fragmentary

and partial that disappointment and disillusionment are inevitable. This, indeed, is one of the most important functions of a counselor, to discover how much young people actually know of each other's life, to point out the limitations of their knowledge of each other, and to aid them to understand each other more completely. The counselor can render no greater service than to open the eyes of young people to a full-length portrait of each other. This should be done only after the counselor himself is sure of all the facts.

This brings us directly to a discussion of the courtship and engagement period. How has this period been spent? It is natural for the young man to want to appear at his best when he is courting a young woman and when he is engaged to her, and the same thing is true of the young woman when she is being courted and when she is engaged. Not only do these two young people want to look their best, but they try to act their best. Their very regard for each other prompts them to do and to say only those things that they think will please each other. In other words, young men and young women during the engagement and courtship period may see only the better or the best side of each other. There is also the danger in these days that they will spend what time they can with each other in visits and forms of entertainment and places of pleasure that will give them little opportunity to become well acquainted with each other and each other's personality and characteristics. Unfortunately, young men feel that the only way in which to court a young woman is to "take her out," and the young woman also feels that unless a young man "takes her out," he is not interested in her. A hectic courtship of this character is exciting, but it does not reveal to young people the things they ought to know. On the contrary, they soon discover

that their courtship has been tumultuous but unsubstantial and even somewhat artificial.

Unless young men and women take time to talk to one another on important problems, personal, social, and otherwise; unless they have the opportunity to exchange thoughts and experiences; unless they find a way in which to discover each other's aims and aspirations; unless they come to see each other not as they would like to be but as they are, the courtship and engagement will have failed altogether of their purpose. For the purpose of the courtship and engagement is to serve as a probationary period, a period in which two young people are to prove to each other that they are suited and that it is safe and right to marry. But this probation cannot take place if the courtship and engagement period is so short or so superficial or so hectic or so influenced by extraneous circumstances that the two young people cannot know each other as they should. It is therefore necessary for the counselor to inquire as tactfully as possible about the way in which they have spent the time with each other. What motion pictures have they seen, and what have they said to each other? What plays have they attended, and what has been their discussion after the play? Have they ever gone to church or synagogue together, and what have been their comments to each other upon the service and the sermon? Have they visited an art gallery or listened to a concert with each other, and what has been the effect of the pictures and the music upon them? Have they read a book together, and what have been their conclusions separately and together? The answers to these questions tell us much that we need to know.

One way in which to discover whether two young people are suited to each other is to review their period of engagement and courtship with them. Perhaps there is no

courtship and engagement period in which some little difficulty does not develop. This is inevitable in view of the stress under which men and women live and the strain to which they are subjected from day to day. If they have had misunderstandings, if they have had disagreements, if they have suffered clashes and conflicts, certain questions must be asked: "How often did these occur? How long did they last? How serious did they seem?" And most of all, "Concerning what did the misunderstandings or disagreements or conflicts take place?" If they are unable to remember, if the cause of the clash was some minor matter that is now forgotten, the probability is that the real trouble was unimportant in itself. But in cases in which the conflicts occurred often, in cases in which the conflicts generated a feeling of antagonism, they ought to reconsider patiently the wisdom of marriage. The probabilities are that the causes of the trouble lie deep and will continue as a source of dissension throughout married life. If after reconsideration of all the factors involved the two young people finally decide to marry, the least they can agree to do is to learn how to accommodate themselves to each other. This program of accommodation or adjustment will often require the guidance and cooperation of a counselor.

If, on the other hand, during the period of courtship and engagement there have been no misunderstandings, no disagreements of any consequence, no conflicts of a serious nature, other questions must be asked. To what do they attribute the absence of misunderstandings, disagreements, and conflicts? In some instances it will be found that the two young people tacitly and deliberately avoid all controversial questions. This may be due to a genuine desire to maintain amity and concord in spite of differences; or it may be due to a conscious determination to postpone the discussion of differences



until after the marriage. This is a dangerous program of action. In other instances it will be found either that the young man yields to the young woman or that the young woman yields to the young man whenever a disagreement arises. This yielding of one to the other may be a sign of affection, or it may be an evidence of weakness. If it is weakness, both the young man and the young woman should be cautioned, for this is a hazardous basis on which to build a married life. Sooner or later contempt will develop in the strong and resentment in the weak. In other instances, the absence of discord may be due not to avoidance or weakness but to the positive factor of agreement and harmony, that is, agreement in all matters that are fundamental and harmony in the essential relationship that must be central in married life. In these instances it is evident that the two young people are suited to each other and that they will live together in concord and intelligent companionship.

What are some of the psychological factors that should be considered with young men and young women who plan to marry? One factor certainly is *temperament*. Temperament cannot be easily defined, and it is difficult even to describe. Of what temperament itself is composed may be a matter of scientific debate. It may arise out of the physical or the psychical constitution or both; it may be due to underdevelopment or overdevelopment of some element that enters into personality; or it may be that individuals just differ from each other in their make-up and that these differences are both natural and normal. But whatever the explanation of temperament it is one of the factors that must be taken into account in marriage counseling. It is too real and too powerful in its influence and its action to be ignored. We know that some people are of one temperament and that some are of another; some people are temperamentally vivacious

and volatile, and others are temperamentally stolid and dull; some are temperamentally conservative and cautious, and others are adventurous and experimental; some are introverts, and others are extroverts. "Temperamental incompatibility" is, in other words, more than a legal phrase. It expresses fundamental differences that we all recognize but the significance of which we do not always correctly understand in the matter of marriage. The experienced counselor will be able to discover in the course of one interview or conference the temperamental expressions of both the young man and the young woman and will be able to classify them with measurable understanding and accuracy.

Is it wise for two people of different temperaments to marry? The answer to this question is not simple. When two young people realize that they are temperamentally different and ask the question directly, "Do you think we should marry?" the answer can seldom be a categorical yes or no. Much depends upon the degree of difference. There are some temperaments that differ so greatly, that are so far apart from each other, that it is utterly impossible for the two people to work together in harmony and to live together in happiness. The old adage that opposites complement each other is without basis in this field. Opposites in temperament may only irritate and antagonize each other. There are other instances in which two young people differ from each other in temperament, but the difference between them is not so great as to threaten their married life. From time to time minor irritations will develop, and these minor irritations may be aggravated by other incidents. The young man is inclined to be reticent and secretive, and the young woman is disposed to be open and utterly frank; the young woman will want to go out and enjoy herself, and the young man will want to sit home and

read or rest. These differences in temperamental make-up may not in themselves be serious. The young people, however, must guard themselves against invasion of extraneous circumstances and alien individuals, for these may turn a minor difference and misunderstanding into a major conflict and source of distress.

On the other hand, there are temperaments of such a character that it is difficult for two people of the same type to live together for any great length of time and to develop a stimulating companionship. This is certainly true of those who are of an excitable temperament. They cannot come together without a clash or an explosion. A marriage that is interrupted by a constant series of explosive experiences cannot survive very long. This the two young people must understand. It is also true that two people who are of the same inert and inactive temperament, two people who are stolid and phlegmatic, two people who are both introverts may become a source of inexpressible boredom to each other. The likeness in temperament instead of bringing them closer to each other seems to build up barriers of silence and to isolate them from each other. In such cases as these it is utterly impossible for the two young people to achieve any genuine oneness of mind and spirit. In other words, some couples may discover that they are too far apart in the matter of temperament, and others may discover that they are too much alike. On the basis of studies of personality and on the basis of long years of experience it seems reasonable to state that people who wish to live together must live on the same plane temperamentally and that they must live within a reasonable and safe range of each other, not too near and not too far.

This does not mean that people who differ in temperament must not marry. For it is possible for two persons of dissimilar temperaments to make adjustments, to work

out a mode of life that will permit them to live together reasonably well. This is now an accepted fact. Temperament, we have discovered, is not a force that cannot be controlled or curbed. It is, in fact, one of the elements in human nature that can be disciplined and that can be modified. The trouble is that men and women who differ from each other do not realize that they can modify their temperament, or it may be that they even refuse to undertake the task of correcting and retraining themselves. If a man is of a nervous and excitable temperament, he can if he wishes control his nervousness and curb his excitability and make himself a much more agreeable person. If a woman is of a silent and secretive disposition, she can if she wishes learn to be more open and frank and to make herself a more companionable person. In order to make these changes, however, the man or the woman or both must first be informed of the facts and then must be encouraged or induced to agree to a course of reeducation. The presentation of the facts may come as a shock but a shock that is needed and necessary. The program of reeducation may take weeks or months, but it is time that the young man or the young woman must be willing to invest for the sake of personal happiness. The investment must be an enterprise of cooperation if it is to succeed.

Another psychological factor that should be considered in marriage counseling is *mentality*. Is the young man and is the young woman mentally mature enough to understand the meaning of marriage and family relationships? Some young people seem to be of limited mental capacity; their intelligence is below the average and seems incapable of improvement. In spite of the fact that they attain the legal age of marriage, that is, the age of eighteen or twenty-one, they fail at this age to achieve mental maturity. Mental maturity is not necessarily a

matter of education. Some young people succeed in graduating from high school and even from college without reaching maturity in their mental life. These are facts that must be recognized. The question always is, "What shall we do in such cases?" There are only two things that we can advise in this stage. One is to live as far as possible on a simple level of life. Young men and women cannot solve problems in algebra and trigonometry and calculus when their mental development limits them to the problems of simple arithmetic. The second thing is to teach them to consult others when problems of a more difficult character come into their lives. The trouble with this group is that they constantly attempt to wrestle with problems for which they do not possess the strength or the power. They therefore need constant instruction and guidance.

A more difficult problem arises when we discover that two young people differ widely in their mental development. This difference in mental development we must not confuse with a difference in educational progress and achievement. The fact that a young woman is a college graduate with a master's diploma or even a doctor's degree and that the young man has had only a high-school or even a grammar-school course is not in itself a serious detriment to marriage and to happiness. The fact that a young man is a graduate of a medical school or a law school or a seminary and that the young woman has only a college or a high-school education is not necessarily a source of discord or unhappiness. For men and women learn much from reading and discussions and experience as well as from formal classwork in school and college. But it is important that both the young man and the young woman recognize the implications of this difference. The young man must not be impatient with the young woman if because of lack of education and

training she is unable to understand the problems that interest him and that only men with similar training can discuss. Nor must the young woman allow herself to grow uncomfortable because her husband is not able to enter into the intricacies of the subject in which because of long study she is at home. In other words, the two people must reconcile themselves to each other's limited education and accomplishments.

This does not mean that the two young people should do nothing more. The differences in education, in training, in experience, and in cultural development impose upon not one but both the obligation of improvement and advancement. The fact that the young woman has had the advantages of high-school and college and graduate work and that the young man has not, means that the young woman must cooperate with the young man in every effort to compensate him for the lack he has sustained. And the fact that the young man has had the advantage of a collegiate and professional education and that the young woman has not, means that the young man should do his utmost to encourage the young woman to outgrow the losses she has suffered. Unless the two young people plan out a program that will achieve these purposes, they will discover the differences growing deeper and their distance from each other increasing in length. One way of preventing this from occurring is for the young man or the young woman to attend lectures and to take courses. If they can do this together, they will share an experience that will bring them closer to each other. But perhaps the better way is for the two young people to map out a program through which they will be able to work with each other. This means that they must set aside time for study and for discussion. It also means that one must prepare himself or herself to teach and that the other must be willing to learn.

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They will in time come to see that no form of association will give them a better understanding of each other and a more tender and affectionate interest in each other's welfare.

It is far more serious when a young man who is highly intelligent and learned plans to marry a young woman who is little more than a high-grade moron; or when a young woman who possesses an active mind and a keen intellect plans to marry a man who is physically attractive and mentally dull. Such couples do come together, and they do marry. The young woman in the moronic class is flattered by the interest and attention of a man so superior in mental power and achievement and easily imagines that she is in love with him. The man, on the other hand, finds that the young woman of this type is entertaining and a relief from the severe mental labors in which he is daily engaged. This kind of a wife may serve well in moments of relaxation and recreation, but married life is made up of more than these moments, and the man is inevitably destined to embarrassment and the woman to disappointment. The counselor in facing this problem must decide how far he is warranted in discouraging the marriage. He may not feel that he is justified in advising the young people not to marry at all. Perhaps the wisest course to pursue is to make a separate appointment with the person who is of superior intellectual ability and to point out the dangers of disillusionment and suffering in a marriage with a person of inferior intellectual capacity. This is an ungracious and thankless task to assume but not a task that the counselor can disown.

A third psychological factor in marriage is *mutual interest*. Young people may not realize that the legal, the economic, and especially the biological foundations of marriage are not enough. As the years pass, they will

discover that these aspects of marriage play a diminishing role. In the beginning the biological relationship may seem to them primary. But in the course of time it takes a secondary place, and unless the two young people discover that they have other foundations on which to build, that they have interests in common and activities in which they can engage together, their married life is in danger of becoming an empty and even a distasteful experience. They find that they have nothing to talk about when they meet, that they dislike being silent in each other's presence. The result is that they go anywhere to escape being alone with each other. The ceaseless effort of many young people to seek entertainment and excitement outside their home is an evidence of the fact that the foundations on which their marriage at one time rested have begun to weaken and crumble. This condition accounts for the tragic fact that so many divorces, fully one-third of the total number, are granted during the first four or five years of marriage. This is a startling proof that young people today are not building their marriages upon foundations that are safe and secure. New foundations are being laid, and upon these foundations they must learn to build.

The counselor therefore must be concerned with this item of interest. Have these two young people found that they are interested in the same things? Have they found that they enjoy discussing with each other the things in which they are individually interested? Have they found that they want to do together the things that seem to them important? It is most necessary to emphasize to young men and women that marriage today more than in other times means comradeship and that comradeship can be based only upon community of interests. Community of interests may lie in any field—in agriculture, in industry, in commerce, in finance; in athletics, in



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motion pictures, in the theater, in literature, in music; in medicine, in science, in politics, in history, or in religion. But the mere fact that two young people like to go to motion pictures or like to go to the theater or like to dance is not in itself an evidence of common interest. They may engage in these activities in their search for pleasure and as a means of escape. This attitude is very different from the earnestness that young people reveal when they are sincerely interested in the same subject. They will, for example, go to the theater not only to spend the evening but to see a good play and to discuss it afterward. They will go to a concert not only to spend the evening with each other but to share the rare experience of listening to great composers and great artists. The spirit in which they discuss the music that they hear will be a test of their common interest in this field of art and beauty.

Is it necessary for the interests of the man and the interests of the woman to be identical? This question young people not infrequently ask each other and the counselor. No, it is not necessary for happiness in marriage for men and women to limit themselves in this manner. Men and women, we find, have major interests, and they also have groups of minor interests. If the major interest of the man is the same as the major interest of the woman, if, for example, the major interest of both is medicine or music, they will find that they have a broad basis on which to build their comradeship. If, however, the major interest of the man is the minor interest of the woman or the major interest of the woman is the minor interest of the man, they will still have much in common. For example, the major interest of the man may be business, and the major interest of the woman may be literature. But literature may also be a minor interest of the man, and this will serve as a basis of

companionship. But if the man and the woman have only minor interests in common, if their major interests are not shared with each other, the bond that binds them together on the psychological level cannot be very great. It takes time in order to analyze interests and to assist young people to face the findings. They often misunderstand themselves and frequently misunderstand each other. Worse than this, they not infrequently delude themselves into believing that they have interests that they would like to possess.

There are few instances in human experience in which the two circles of life coincide and coalesce. In most instances the two circles of life intercept. The greater the degree of interception the broader is the basis for comradeship; that is, the more interests two people have in common, the wider the foundation upon which they can build their life together. Should the two circles of life only touch at the circumference, there is grave danger that the man and woman will in time drift apart. The man will seek someone who is interested in the things that interest him, and the woman also will seek someone who is interested in the things that interest her. This is happening constantly in the experience of men and women, and the danger of this mode of life must be evident even to young people when they are brought face to face with the facts. Interests lead to associations, and associations may easily lead to alliances. This is what always happens when the biological allurements lose their power and when there are no common interests to bind men and women in their married life. A study of extra-matrimonial relationships and alliances indicates clearly that the source of difficulty lies in this fact that the two people united in marriage are not one in interest, aspiration, and ideals. If this fact is recognized early, it is often possible to discover and to establish a community

of interest that will save the two young people from separation and their marriage from disruption.

It is therefore important to remind young people that the interests they have in common, major or minor, must be cultivated. Unless men and women do cultivate those interests that are common in their life and cultivate them together, there is real danger that these interests will weaken and wither and die. Again and again this happens in married life. At the end of five or ten years the man says to himself, "My wife seems no longer interested in the things that we used to discuss with each other." And the woman says to herself, "My husband seems no longer interested in the things that we used to do together." This leads to disappointment, to disillusionment, and to indifference. On the other hand, some men and women can and do consciously undertake to build up a set of interests and activities in which they can share. They may begin with some sport and from this derive much mutual pleasure. They may begin with reading certain columns from the newspaper or certain sections of a magazine or a little booklet like *The Reader's Digest* and find in the material an almost inexhaustible source of conversation and stimulation. They may begin with music, a series of symphonies, or the opera and discover in the compositions and the composers a never-ending well of delight and enjoyment. It is surprising how very much can be accomplished in this way, what broad and solid foundations can be built for married life!

Perhaps it would not be unwise to call the attention of the young couple to some of the things that they hold in common and can cultivate together. One thing is the home itself. The home is not a set of rooms in a house but the place in which they live, the center of their activities, the retreat to which they return when the day is done. It takes time and patience and skill and also devotion to

build a home, to build it in such a manner that the young people will feel a pride in its possession and dwelling within its walls. In the building of this home, in the selection and furnishing and arrangement and decoration the husband must have as much a part as the wife. In case the wife is not well or an emergency arises, the husband should be able to take charge without a moment's delay. If the husband learns all that his wife can teach him, it will be their home and not merely hers. The home, in truth, can express not only the taste of the young man and the young woman; it can express, also, their feeling for each other. Some homes are empty of spirit, colorless, cold, and uninviting; other homes radiate with the personality of the couple and are warm and cordial and beautiful. This kind of home will become not a refuge for the body but a source of refreshment for mind and spirit. The test of a home is this: Is it the one place where the husband and wife want to be, or is it a place from which they seek to escape?

The young people also have in common relatives and friends. It is very important that both the young man and the young woman understand in advance or as early as possible the place that friends and relatives are to occupy in their program of life. Now and then difficulties arise solely as the result of disagreement. "He does not like my friends, and I do not like his. He does not like my relatives, and I am not fond of his." It is true that we do not choose our relatives, and it is certainly true that we do not choose each other's relatives. And it is likewise true that "other relatives" not infrequently become a source of disturbance. Relatives-in-law, fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters, may invade the life of a young couple in such a manner as to cause the young couple embarrassment and distress. Sometimes the mother of the young woman or the young man insists

upon so large a place in the home of the young people that the young people sooner or later develop a sense of resentment. On the other hand, we must not forget that relatives do form a part of every marriage. Marriage is not limited to the young man and the young woman; families are not banished or abolished through the marriage ceremony. And among all the relatives there must be some that both the young man and the young woman like and can cultivate or that they can learn to like and can encourage. In almost every marriage the time comes when the young couple are glad that they have relatives who can come to their aid.

What is true of relatives is true, although not to the same degree, of friends. It is difficult for a young woman to dismiss all her friends and for a young man to discard all his associates immediately upon marriage. Nor should this be necessary. There must certainly be among all the friends of both the young man and the young woman a number that they can both enjoy and that they will want to visit and that they can encourage to be members of their own circle. It means much as the years pass to have friends in common, friends who are close enough to share their joys and to sympathize with them in their sorrows. People do not realize what this means until trial and distress enter their lives. It is also important for young people to realize that it is dangerous for the young man and the young woman to cultivate separate groups of friends. This in time divides their interests and may even separate them. The young woman will want to meet her girlhood friends in the afternoon, and the young man may want to meet his boyhood associates from time to time in evening gatherings. This is understandable and legitimate. But in addition to this there should be gatherings to which the young people will go together. It is also well for young people to have a few

older friends that they can visit and in whom they can confide and whose experience and counsel they can trust in the discussion of their own problems. Age does not always bring understanding, but it often does mean maturity and wisdom.

The most important thing, however, that the couple have in common is their marriage itself. This is the most precious thing they possess, and more than friends and relatives and the home it needs to be cultivated. Strange as it may seem at first, marriage does not grow of itself, or if it does grow of itself, it very likely will grow in the wrong way. Nothing is more distressing than for two people to look at each other in disappointment or despair and think silently or say openly, "What has happened to our marriage? Our relationship in the beginning seemed so secure and so beautiful. Now all the romance has faded out, and we seem to have lapsed to the level of just two ordinary people." Problems arise in the course of every marriage, difficulties develop, more or less serious, distress comes with illness, unemployment, and losses. The danger is that these unhappy experiences may separate two people and that they may grow away from each other. This is especially true when two people have not learned to share life with each other at every point. Instead of attempting to solve their problems, to meet their difficulties, and to carry their burdens separately and alone, they must learn to seek each other for counsel, for cooperation, and for comfort. They will discover that burdens seem less heavy and the road will seem less rough when they travel side by side and hand in hand. This is the way in which they will travel when they learn to share with each other not only what they outwardly possess but what they inwardly are.

In other words, the marriage relationship between the man and the woman must be watched and nourished

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with utmost care if it is to be preserved and deepened. Perhaps one way of doing this is for the young people to think of marriage as a union that is ideal and perfect. This is what they want their marriage to be. In order that their marriage may become perfect and ideal, they must tend it as they would tend a garden. They must pluck out every weed that appears; they must encourage every seed and stalk and flower; they must guard their marriage against every alien and hostile influence. Soil and sunshine, pure air and tender protection—these in time will bring the buds to blossom and will fill the garden with fragrance and loveliness. The little things that we do with and for each other from day to day frequently count more than the large things that we do only now and then. The little courtesies that we show each other as we meet and part, the little kindnesses, the little acts of thoughtfulness and concern, all these things count more than we are accustomed to think in the development of marriage. It is well to remember anniversaries; every anniversary should be made an occasion of joy and rededication. It is even better to allow each day to make its own contribution to the growth and beauty of marriage and to the expansion and splendor of the ideal we cherish.

## CHAPTER 7

### ETHICAL IDEALS

A discussion of the religious, ethical, and spiritual ideals of marriage and the family should begin in a simple manner. If we begin with dogmatic doctrines or abstract principles or philosophical conceptions, we may alienate both the young man and the young woman. Young men and young women today are not irreligious at heart; they are aware, sometimes only dimly, at other times keenly, of the sacredness of marriage and the sanctity of family life. But they reject the dogmatic interpretation of religion and resent any attempt on our part to impose dogmas upon them. Young people today also realize that there are moral codes, and they agree that these codes of conduct should govern our life. But they are impatient with principles that seem to have no relationship to actual problems; and they are suspicious of ethical formulations, no matter how well phrased. Young people today likewise are aware of the spiritual aspects of life; some feel this deeply, and most of them have a vivid and intense sense of idealism, especially in the matter of marriage. But they are uninterested in philosophical theories, and they are irritated by metaphysical interpretations of human relationships. Young people today, in other words, think in pragmatistical terms; they are concerned only with those subjects that come within the range of their own personal experience, and they insist upon living a life of intellectual independence.



One way to introduce a discussion of the ethical meaning of marriage is to ask, "Have you two young people discussed the meaning of marriage with each other quite frankly? Have you spoken to each other candidly about the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological aspects of the life that you will live together?" Again and again when we ask this question, we sense that there is something in the mind of one or the other that has not been revealed. Their very manner means that the two young people have not confided in each other freely and frankly and fully. The failure of the young man and the young woman to confide in each other is not necessarily due to a desire to deceive. It may be due to many other causes. A false sense of modesty due to social seclusion and isolation or to mis-education may be the cause. Subconscious fears and inhibitions due to childhood experiences and adolescent misunderstandings and confusions may be the cause. An extreme sense of privacy and personal pride due to the peculiar psychical constitution or personality of the individual may be the cause. Whatever the cause it is necessary for young people to understand that concealment builds up barriers between the man and the woman and that barriers not only separate them from each other but make it impossible for them to achieve that oneness of mind and heart and spirit that is of the very essence of marriage.

It often happens that the man feels that he does not wish to worry his young wife; and just as often it happens that the woman feels that she does not wish to disturb her young husband. The result is that they withhold from each other the doubts, the fears, the anxieties that simmer or seethe within them from time to time; and that they conceal from each other the irritations from which they suffer from day to day, the things that others say and

do to them, and the disappointments that they meet. In acting this way they make the mistake of believing that they are excluding from the circle of their married life those experiences that would serve as disturbing influences. They forget that everything that happens to them individually and personally affects their conduct and their attitude. Unless they explain their conduct and their attitude, there is no doubt that their conduct and their attitude will be misinterpreted. This happens constantly in the course of married life. Sooner or later the young man will say, "Why did you not tell me what was troubling you? I then would have understood your manner and your attitude toward me." Or the young woman will say, "Why did you not talk about those things that were causing you so much inward concern? I would not then have misunderstood the way in which you have acted for the last week." There is only one course of action for young people to follow, and that is to cultivate the habit of confiding in each other. This habit they must learn to cultivate not from time to time but from day to day. This is the only way in which they can save each other from misinterpretations. They must, in other words, keep the channels of communication and communion open and free.

The first principle that young people must learn to practice is to speak to each other in *frankness* and *sincerity* and *truth*. This does not mean that the young man and the young woman must feel under the necessity of revealing to each other every thought they have ever had, every word they have ever spoken, every act of their life open and secret. It is not necessary to expose every detail of our life even to the one we marry. It is only when concealment of the facts would be equivalent to a deception that the facts themselves should be revealed. For example, if a young man believes that the young

woman he is about to marry is twenty when she is really twenty-five or twenty-six, or if the young woman believes that the young man has an important position with a large income when in reality he is working in a minor capacity at a small salary, it is a deception not to tell the truth. No young man or woman has a right to withhold or conceal the truth even in such simple matters as these and to pose for what he or she is not and cannot be. Sooner or later the facts themselves will come to the surface, and the discovery of the facts and the deception may implant the first seeds of distrust and difficulty in married life. Against this young people must guard themselves with scrupulous rectitude. And they must so guard themselves not only before marriage but throughout the years of their life together.

In a number of instances the young man may be troubled over some experience, some episode, some physical condition within himself. He may be in doubt as to whether he should or should not disclose this condition to his bride and discuss it with her. The condition, for example, may be a physical lesion due to some disease of childhood or adolescence, such as a weakness of vision or a defect in hearing. It surely is not necessary for the young man to discuss with the young woman all the diseases that he has had, measles, diphtheria, scarlet fever, or even a venereal infection unless these diseases and infections have resulted in an impairment that may affect his marriage. He may have passed through a nervous disturbance or a period of mental depression, but there is no good reason why he should discuss these experiences that he has suffered unless they have resulted in some defect that may interfere with his marriage or unless they were of such a nature that they may recur. Not infrequently young men with sensitive consciences are worried over such questions, and in order to relieve

themselves of worry it is wise to consult some person whose training and experience and standards in the sphere of ethics make him competent to advise and to guide. One service that the counselor can render is to uncover these worries and to remove their cause. The damage they do is often out of all proportion to their importance.

In other instances the young man may be seriously disturbed over some past deviation in conduct. He may have gambled and lost money; he may have acquired the habit of drink and become drunk on a number of occasions; he may have taken funds that did not belong to him; he may have forged checks and been arrested; he may have had affairs with women; he may have associated with evil companions and engaged in evil enterprises. The question the young man must ask himself now is this: "Have I outgrown and completely recovered from this habit, this experience, these associates? How seriously has this act damaged my personality? Would the disclosure of what has occurred in my life mar my marriage?" In this fingerprinting age men have been exposed as offenders against the law even though their later life has been beyond reproach. The exposure has resulted in grave consequences both for the man and the members of his family. These questions the young man with the help of the counselor must learn to answer correctly, and he must fully understand the risks that he alone can assume if he remains silent. Silence in these cases, failure to speak of his misconduct to the young woman he is to marry, is equivalent to deception and should not be condoned. It is difficult to confess one's sins, but without confession there can be no atonement. And without atonement there can be, what the word literally means, no at-one-ment.

The young woman also may be troubled over some experience, some episode, some condition within herself.

The fact that during her childhood she had chicken pox or mumps or that during her girlhood she had pneumonia or an attack of appendicitis may not be of any special interest to the young man unless the disease or operation has resulted in a condition that may adversely influence her marriage. Even if she suffered with a venereal infection during her childhood, as many girls have as a result of contact with unclean and infected nursemaids, and if she has completely recovered, it is not necessary to be concerned about this fact unless the disease has seriously affected some organ. The fact that during her adolescent period a young woman has suffered with attacks of hysteria or melancholy is not of grave importance unless these attacks were evidence of a nervous and mental condition that is likely to result in recurrence. Many young women during the passage from girlhood to young womanhood develop conditions and symptoms that are characteristic of this period and that they completely outgrow. Sensitive young women, however, as a result of a little knowledge of psychology and mental hygiene may misinterpret their symptoms and attach to them undue significance. In these cases it is necessary to disabuse their minds of incorrect impressions and of all concern. They must come to their marriage with a mind that is free and a conscience that is clear.

The young woman, however, may have been guilty of some form of misbehavior in the course of her life. This is more serious, more serious in the case of a young woman than in the case of a young man. The truth is that men will forgive less in a woman than women will forgive in a man. And some men will not forgive in the woman they are to marry things that they allow themselves to do. Here again the question must be, "Have I outgrown and completely recovered from this experience? Has this experience in any way damaged my personality?"

Would this experience be a source of reproach if it would be disclosed later to my husband?" Much, of course, depends upon the man in this matter. If a man, for example, does not value virginity in a woman, her premarital sexual experiences will not greatly affect him or interfere with the marriage. If, on the other hand, the man does regard the virtue of woman as inviolate, he may be deeply shocked and may never recover his confidence in the woman. The one thing for a woman to do is to find out what the man expects, what standards he sets for women, and what conduct he would tolerate or would not condone. There are instances in which the man's love is so great that he is ready to forgive any act that the woman may have committed. With rare exceptions women feel that they must come to the altar cleansed and purified, and this they can achieve only through confession and repentance. It does not matter greatly, it is necessary to add, whether the confession is made to a minister, a doctor, a lawyer, a counselor who is not any one of these. The important thing is the confession itself and the release that comes therewith.

A second principle that it is wise and necessary to discuss with young people is that of *trust*. It seems so evident that a man and a woman who are united in marriage should trust each other that any discussion of this question appears to be unnecessary, even ungracious and gratuitous. "You two young people of course trust each other?" The immediate reaction to this question, asked in a casual manner, is surprise and sometimes there is a little resentment. The answer almost inevitably is, "Certainly we trust each other." And still this may not always be true. The expression on the face of one or the other, the lowered eyelids, the averted glance, the shifting of the body often reveal the fact that their trust in each

other is not without reservations, that it is not as complete and perfect as they themselves would like to think. Trust comes only with confidence, with confidence in each other's way of life. "I know that he never is guilty of evasion or falsehood, that he will always tell me the truth." "I am sure that she would never compromise or violate a principle in which she believes, that she will always do what she believes to be right." Trust, in other words, comes with faith in each other's integrity of heart and purpose. This faith must of necessity be based upon a conviction that grows out of experience, an experience that convinces us that the man or woman we trust will never fail but will fulfill every promise that is made. "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, And speaketh truth in his heart; . . . He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not; . . . He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

The lack of trust may reveal itself even in minor matters. For example, we may ask the young man, "Do you believe in a joint bank account and in sharing with your wife control of the funds of the family?" In many instances the man will hesitate to answer, and often he will say frankly that he does not approve of this plan. Why? Fundamentally, because he has not complete confidence in his wife's ability to spend the money he makes wisely and thriftily. He may even suspect that she will divert a part of the fund to purposes of which he does not know or does not approve, such as a private savings account or contributions to her own family. In other words, the man does not completely trust his wife in money matters. This is not an uncommon experience. Another example is the case in which a man does not tell his wife the things that are told him. Why? Fundamentally because he feels that what he tells her in confidence she will repeat to others, to her intimate

friends, to the members of her bridge club. It is true that some women find it difficult to keep confidences, that they just lack a sense of responsibility. The husband knows this, and therefore he does not trust his wife. A further illustration is the case in which the man does not inform his wife fully in regard to his own possessions and business affairs. Why? It is not only because he thinks his wife does not understand these matters; it is more because he has not implicit confidence in his wife's judgment and wisdom.

Does the woman completely trust the man? "I do not know how he spends the money he earns." This comment, really this complaint, means that the woman is a little suspicious of the man's expenditures. She may believe that he is just thoughtless and extravagant in the use of funds, or she may believe that he is spending the money for wrong purposes. "I do not inquire into his business affairs and practices." This answer simply means that the woman does not altogether approve of the business code of the man and that she suspects he employs methods that to her would seem wrong. "I do sometimes wonder what he does when he is away from me." Behind this statement, not uncommon, lies the feeling of uneasy mistrust. "With whom does he speak when he is not with me? What is his manner? Does he flatter other women? How far does he go? Does he make engagements of which I do not know? Has he associations of which I am not aware?" These questions would never arise in the heart of a woman if she felt that complete and perfect trust that is one of the supreme achievements in the marriage relationship. Young people must understand this, that a man and a woman who plan to marry or who are married must so conduct themselves that there never will be any cause or occasion for distrust, that perfect trust can come only out of their unquestioned faith in



each other. Unquestioned faith itself can come only from conduct that is unimpeachable.

It is true that some men and women are naturally suspicious. They suspect others of doing and saying and even of thinking things of which others are utterly guiltless. It is also true that some men are instinctively envious of others and charge them with motives of which they are altogether innocent; and that there are some women who are incurably jealous and accuse others of conduct of which they are utterly blameless. These men and women are a constant source of unhappiness to themselves and of suffering to others. No matter how careful and cautious others are, no matter how diligently and persistently they endeavor to avoid even the appearance of doing wrong, they find themselves always in a difficult position. For it is always difficult to convince suspicious men and women and to persuade those who are envious and suspicious that we did not mean what they thought. It is necessary and urgent that the counselor in all these cases do his or her utmost to assist these people to correct the weaknesses in their nature and to outgrow their defects. For human nature even of this type can be changed, and the time to begin the change is before marriage. The change undoubtedly means reeducation, retraining, and reorganization of one's inward life. This can be accomplished only through the most careful and conscientious counsel and guidance. Until this is accomplished, mutual confidence and trust cannot be established between the man and the woman who are to live together in the intimate inward relationship of marriage.

A third principle to be presented and discussed is that of *justice*. "Do you mean to be fair and just in your relationship with each other?" What a question to ask two young people who are about to marry! "Of course we do; how could we be otherwise?" This answer is

natural, and still unfairness and injustice are so often a source of discord and distress in marriage that we cannot omit this subject from our discussion. Let the young people think back over their engagement period and their period of courtship. Have they always been fair and just to each other? "Has nothing occurred that made one of you feel that the other had not been altogether fair?" They will probably then recall some minor misunderstanding, something that occurred at a party, something that happened in regard to an appointment. "Yes, I was late, a half-hour late on one occasion, and he was so angry that he reproached me. That was not fair. He did not even inquire why I was late. Had he done so, he would have learned that I had had a slight accident. His unfairness spoiled the whole evening for me and made me miserable." "Yes, I had taken out another young woman once, and she was very angry about this and reproached me severely. That was unjust. She did not even ask who the young woman was. Had she done so, she would have learned, as she did later, that the young woman was a distant relative that I had to take at least to lunch. It was not just to condemn me without hearing the facts." Both these cases illustrate the danger in this area of married life.

It is well that young people should be forewarned in regard to these dangers. Again and again men and women are unfair and unjust in their marriage relationships. The reason is not always failure to ascertain the facts and to learn the truth. Sometimes men and women are unfair to each other because, to put it frankly, they are more or less selfish. "He thinks only of his own pleasures and not of what I would like." "She thinks only of what she desires and not at all of what I wish." Some men and women are that way and some grow that way. Selfish people are always unfair because they are inter-

ested primarily in themselves and do not think of the rights and the welfare of others. In marriage there can be no room for selfishness. And yet selfishness, we find, is one of the causes of marital unhappiness. This selfishness often is the result of unwise example and improper training in the home. Not all children learn to outgrow the selfishness that is so characteristic of childhood. This attitude persists and often deepens during adolescence. But the young man may not realize how selfish the young woman is, and the young woman may not recognize the selfishness of the young man. They may be too absorbed in each other to see the truth, that is, until after the honeymoon. Young people should learn the truth before they marry; they should learn that marriage means unselfishness, that the more selfishness there is in marriage, the less room there is for happiness.

But sometimes men and women are unjust in their marriage relations for another reason. To put it bluntly, they are of a mean and evil disposition. "He does not think that he is mean to me; but he seems to do things just to provoke me." "She seems to be a little demon at times. Otherwise, she would not act as she does." These are unpleasant facts to face, but unless we are ready to face them, there can be no realistic counseling in marriage. Why men and women are mean and venomous and even vicious in their relationships with each other may be a matter for discussion. Their evil disposition may be due to some physical condition, to some psychical disturbance, to an evil environment absorbed into their personality. But whatever the cause this is true, that their disposition will be a constant source of suffering in their married life. The amazing thing is that many men and women are able to disguise themselves so successfully, to conceal their real self until after the marriage ceremony. Then the real self comes to the surface. It is the

duty of the counselor to discover what is behind the mask and to uncover to both the young man and the young woman what he discovers to be the facts. Men must learn to outgrow the meanness in their nature if they mean to be fair; men must learn to control their evil inclinations if they are to be just. This they can do only through a process of reeducation that requires time and patience and, most of all, a firm resolution to reconstruct oneself.

It may be that young men and women are unfair and unjust in their treatment of each other simply because they are morally undeveloped and ethically deficient. The ethical faculty is like all other parts of the psychical constitution: it grows and matures with the years and with experience and cultivation. But as a rule it is later in its awakening and development than other faculties and, unless it is trained and cultivated, it may remain retarded throughout adolescence and adulthood. This is why some men and women who are mentally and emotionally their age seem so unfair and so unjust in their relationships with others. They never think of dividing things not necessarily equally but equitably; that is, they never think of dividing their time, their thought, their interest, their possessions in an equitable manner with other men and other women. Being ethically immature, they never realize that they must share what they have with those who have not. Not even love itself is sufficient to achieve the change that is necessary in their natures. And to this degree the love they feel is impaired and certainly imperfect. Those who are morally well developed always find a joy in sharing what they possess. And when love comes, the joy of sharing is not only doubled but deepened in infinite measure. In truth, when love is perfect and complete, the distinction between mine and thine disappears, and both the man and

the woman discover that the supreme happiness lies in the blessed surrender of one to the other and of both to the union which is their marriage.

It will also aid young men and young women to meet the problems that arise in marriage if they are instructed in the art of *forbearance*. Men and women must learn to be patient and generous and forgiving if they are to achieve harmony and happiness in married life. Men and women do grow impatient under the stress of daily life. They are impatient with ignorance but do little to aid others to acquire knowledge; they are impatient with inefficiency but do little to train others to do things better; they are impatient with evil but do little to end the evil that causes so much trouble. Impatience may be a matter of temperament; it may be a temporary mood due to tension; it may be a symptom of physical pain or emotional distress. This impatience sometimes expresses itself in the home in private and sometimes in public in the midst of friends; sometimes it is directed against those about whom we care nothing and sometimes against those we love the most. Men and women must try to understand the impatience that arises within themselves and also the impatience that arises within others. And even more important than this, they must learn to bear with patience the impatience that others express, and they must also learn to control patiently the impatience within themselves.

Young men and women must remember that we all have our weaknesses, our failings, and our faults. They must remember that work and worry and the never-ending battle of life wear down our resistance. They must learn that temptations assail us almost from hour to hour. And they must remember that even the most saintly cannot maintain themselves at all times at their highest level. They must come to recognize these imperfections

in human nature, and they must learn to be generous and to forgive. When discord comes and dissension develops as the result of our imperfections, we must not grow hard and bitter and hostile. Two young people may quarrel and then find themselves separated from each other for no other reason than that they are too stubborn to come together. "I will not be the first to speak." "He must not only recognize that I am right; he must admit that he is wrong." It is not impossible that the two young people who come to consult us have during their courtship and engagement suffered from such experiences, and it may be that because of their inexperience they have not learned how to solve their own problems. It is therefore necessary to teach them that it is important to be generous with each other, that the art of forgiveness works miracles in all relationships of life but most of all in marriage itself. Without the spirit of generosity and forgiveness marriage would become in most instances impossible.

This brings us to a discussion of the standard of life, that is, the moral standard in accordance with which young people are to live. The importance of the *code of conduct* in marriage and family life is clear to those who have studied the causes of disagreement and the reasons for disruption in marriage. Perhaps there is no one cause that is a source of so much suffering as a fundamental difference in the moral standards of life. It is true that standards change, that what is considered wrong and reprehensible in one age is accepted as right and correct in another age. This is proved by the changes that take place in customs and costumes, in speech and manners, in literature and art, in music and the theater. But there is always a line drawn somewhere. On one side of the line is what men and women regard as decent and right, and on the other side is what men and women regard as

wrong and immoral. It is therefore necessary to ask two young people who are about to marry these questions, "Do you accept the same code of morals? Do you believe in the same standards of life, or do you think there is one standard for the man and another code of conduct for the woman?" It is much better that these questions be asked and answered before the marriage takes place in order to anticipate any disillusionment due to deception. The counselor, therefore, must include the single and the double standard of morals within his program.

This leads directly to the delicate and perplexing problem of chastity and fidelity and a discussion of their relation to marriage. The young man and the young woman may not have spoken of these subjects at all. They may instead take each other's views for granted, only to discover later that they have misunderstood each other altogether. "Had I known that my husband believed in so lenient an interpretation of morals, I should not have married him." "Had I known that my wife did not believe in the strict meaning of monogamy and fidelity, I should not even have courted her." It is better to learn these facts in advance and especially in these times when the standards of life are changing and when the level of morals is in danger of lapsing. The young people who marry today will live in a period of moral confusion, if not moral collapse. A period of this kind comes after every war. Whether it is due to the kind of life that men and women live during an indefinite period of separation from each other or whether it is due to a reaction from the regimentation and high tension of the war period or whether it is due to the eclipse and obscuration of morals in an age of militarism may be a matter of debate. But there can be no debate about the fact itself. The postwar period will witness a further disintegration of ethical ideals. It is therefore most necessary that men

and women who marry now understand each other and agree with each other on the matter of morals without mental reservation or secret compromises.

Conditions today, it must be remembered, are very different from what they were a generation ago. There is much more freedom in our time in all the areas of life and especially in the relationships between young men and young women. Young people allow themselves to do things today that their parents would have regarded as immodest and that their grandparents would have condemned as immoral. They permit themselves to indulge in intimacies that at one time were rigidly reserved only for those who were engaged or for those who were married. All this is true, but it is noticeable that young men do not select the woman they want for a wife from among the girls who have permitted them undue liberties. On the contrary, when a young man really thinks that he is in love with a woman, when he thinks of her as the woman he wants as his wife and as the mother of his children, he inevitably treats her with great respect and with high regard. And these feelings and attitudes make liberties and license impossible. No matter how liberal a man thinks he is, he wants to feel that the woman who comes to him as a wife comes untouched and untarnished, that she comes into her marriage clean in thought and pure in conduct. It is well for young women to remember this fact: Men are less liberal than they think and than they want others to believe. Many a young woman discovers this fact to her dismay only when it is too late.

The same thing is true of women. There are some women who do not seem to care what experiences their husbands have had before marriage or what extra-matrimonial associations they contract. They assume that their husbands have associated with other women.



This, they say, is a man's privilege, and it is true that all through the centuries men have allowed themselves more than one wife or one wife and other women such as concubines or mistresses. And it is true that to this code women have either agreed or reconciled or resigned themselves. But in spite of this and notwithstanding the liberal interpretation of codes of conduct today, most women resent and cannot tolerate infidelity. The truth is that most women are so constituted psychologically that they cannot share the man they love with another woman. The trouble is that not all men realize this, nor can they understand why their wives are so disturbed over their alien associations. Men simply do not appreciate the fact that women are more sensitive in the matter of morals than are men, that they have higher intuitive standards, that they suffer more when these standards are disregarded and the moral code repudiated. The time for men to learn these facts is before marriage. They should learn before they marry what the young women will expect of them, and they should then decide whether or not they can live in accordance with these expectations.

The final question to discuss with young people, the question that is really first in importance as well as final, is *their concept of marriage*. "What do you think is the purpose of marriage?" "What is your ideal of the marriage relationship?" These are questions that young people should consider with the counselor. Too many young men and young women take marriage for granted as they take so many things for granted. They do not allow themselves time to think about the subject, and many have not even interest enough to attempt to discover the meaning or the content of marriage. Marriage may mean nothing more to them than what they have seen in their home, in the circle of their friends, and in

the community in which they live. Marriage may mean to them only what they have learned in studying the teachings and doctrines of their faith. But this doctrine may be a mere formulation of words and not a vital religious program of life. Or it may be that marriage means to them only what they see on the motion-picture screen or hear in the theater or read in books. Their conception of marriage may be utterly vague or confused. Worse than this, their conception of marriage may be woefully distorted and even perverted. "Why do you two young people wish to marry?" is a question that must be answered by something more than "Because we love each other."

Marriage is a legal contract, as we have learned. This contract has certain implications—it endows men and women with certain rights, and it imposes upon them certain responsibilities. There are some marriages, no doubt, that are nothing more than contracts. Marriages of this type are arranged by parents or intermediaries; and it is clearly understood in every case that the marriage is a financial transaction. The amount of money or property involved is not of course included in the marriage contract, but it is included in the verbal or written agreement between the two parties or their representatives. These men and women never rise above the legal level. They agree to the terms of the contract, and they give each other only what the terms of the contract specify. When one or the other asks for more, the immediate answer is, "It is not in the contract." If one or the other gives less, the accusation is quick: "You are not living up to your contract." The marriage that is nothing more than a contract is always in danger of being dissolved. The law may continue to bind two people together as man and wife in a legal sense, but it cannot maintain them in the marriage relationship. It is because

some people think of marriage as nothing more than a contract that their marriages fail.

Marriage has also an economic basis. This is true, as we have learned. In order to develop, it is necessary that two young people have income and agree upon expenditures. Whether the source of income is to be the earning power of the man or the earning power of the woman or both and whether assistance should be accepted from relatives and in what form this assistance should be given are matters to be carefully considered. Who is to control the funds of the family, the husband or the wife or both together in consultation with the children, is also a matter to be discussed; what items are to be included in the budget and the percentage of income that is to be allowed for each item are subjects to be studied and upon which decisions must be made. In other words, marriage must concern itself with income, expenditure, and the budget. Marriage means housekeeping and homemaking and implies a knowledge of all that is covered by the term "home economics." To some men and women marriage means nothing more than this. They marry in order to have a home, to have a place to which they can come, where they can eat and sleep and rest when they wish. But the marriage that is nothing more than an economic partnership, a business enterprise, is also in danger. The danger is that one or the other of the partners will fail in his or her obligations, and then the enterprise comes to an end. There is no assurance that a marriage of this character contains the elements of permanency.

Marriage likewise rests upon biological foundations. This, we have learned, is undoubtedly true. Health and heredity are both important in marriage. The sexual relationship is not only important, it is fundamental and requires a knowledge of anatomy and physiology and

hygiene. Contraception, the spacing of children, the planning out of the family are an integral part of the biological program of the family; and in these matters young men and women require counsel and guidance and scientific instruction in order to escape the dangers that arise from ignorance, thoughtlessness, and misinformation. And it is true, we know, that this is all that marriage means to some men and to some women. They think of marriage solely in biological terms, and they live their married life on the biological level. They discover, however, in the course of time that the biological foundations of marriage possess no degree of permanency. On the contrary, the biological relationship loses its allure and potency earlier than many suspect. The man who marries because of biological attractions soon finds that the attractions cease to hold him. And he then seeks other sources that he thinks will prove more interesting and pleasing. This means the beginning of the end of marriage. The biological relationship, no matter how intense in the beginning, may in many cases become in time not a bond of union but a barrier that separates man and woman from each other.

Marriage also undoubtedly involves psychological factors. Compatibility of temperament, community of interests, the sharing of aspirations and ideals enter intimately into marriage and marriage relationships. This we understand better today than we did some years ago; and it is certainly true that men and women as a result of the widespread and deepening interest in mental hygiene appreciate more fully the meaning and the importance of psychological factors. Many men and women in these times consciously marry because they find that they are congenial, because they realize that they are in the same stage of cultural, emotional, and mental development, because they discover that they have interests in

common, and because they seek the companionship that can come from such a marriage. In a marriage in which these factors are present it is not difficult to make the adjustments that marriage always demands, and it is also easy in this type of marriage to cultivate all that the two people have in common. In a marriage of this kind there is certainly more stability and security and happiness than in a marriage that is nothing more than a legal or economic or biological relationship. But even on this level, high as it is, men and women do not find their highest and purest happiness, for marriage at its highest is something more even than a psychological pilgrimage and an intellectual comradeship.

Marriage, in other words, is something more than a legal entity, something more than an economic partnership, something more than a biological mating, something more than a psychological association, something more than a social institution. "Marriage at its highest, and who would have it less than this, is a spiritual relationship sanctioned by society and sanctified by religion. When marriage attains this height it stirs from their sleep elemental impulses that run back through the ages and lose themselves in the mists of primeval nature. It throws open magnificent vistas filled with visions that hover upon the horizon like opalescent clouds floating forever into an infinite heaven. It conjures up glories and splendors that come at the call of no other mystic invocation. It clothes the man and woman it touches with a garment of golden light. It is the one miracle that can turn the poorest heart into an altar of holy fire and the most shrunken soul into a sacred shrine. Browning is right:

God be thanked, the meanest of His creatures  
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,  
One to show a woman when he loves her.

## MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

Those who marry and live together in this spirit know intuitively the meaning of marriage, know that their marriage is not a matter of the years, but a deathless union invested with the radiance of eternal beauty and crowned with the divine and perfect promise of an immortal love.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From “The Meaning of Marriage and the Foundations of the Family,” pp. 12-13.

## CHAPTER 8

### WAR MARRIAGES, INTERMARRIAGES, DIVORCE

#### WAR MARRIAGES

The impact of war upon marriage is just as serious as the shock to other social agencies and institutions. War inevitably speeds up the number of marriages as it speeds up other social processes. During the first years of war the increase in the number of marriages is always exceedingly great. In some communities the number increases to three or four times the normal rate in peacetime. During a war period both youth and adults suffer a loss of balance, a distortion in the sense of direction, and a confusion of aims and objectives. War never fails to change the focus of life, to narrow the perspective, to distract the mental powers, to disturb the equilibrium, and to interfere with the normal generation of emotional energies. These changes not only lead to forms of action and types of conduct that in other days would be regarded as abnormal and incredible; they also lead to the speeding down of educational programs, recreational enterprises, moral codes, and ethical ideals that in other days govern marriage and marriage relationships. If counsel and guidance are advisable in periods of peace, guidance and counsel become urgently necessary in the midst of the turmoil and the turbulence of wartime excitement.

The chief difficulty that we meet in wartime is obvious as well as understandable. When young people come to see us in the days that precede the draft, they do not

really come for counsel and guidance. In fact, they are in no condition mentally or emotionally to listen patiently to what advice we may venture to offer them. What they actually want is an answer to some urgent questions: "How can we secure a license to marry at once?" "What is the law in this state in the matter of age, residence, and ceremony?" "Can the requirements of the law be waived in favor of men in the service?" "Where can we find a minister of our faith to marry us without delay?" "Will the minister marry us even though we are of different religions?" "Is it necessary to have a religious as well as a civil ceremony?" "Do you think we should inform our parents? We have so little time. Can you help us?" These and many similar questions rush from the lips of the young people. They are so eager, so anxious, so overwrought, and just because they are in this condition, it is important to attempt to calm them and to persuade them to discuss their problem with us quietly. It may be that they will refuse to listen at all, that they will reject any counsel we advance, that they will follow their own immediate impulses. This response on their part, however, does not relieve us of the responsibility of telling them as firmly and as emphatically as we can the risks they run and the dangers that threaten marriage in time of war.

That these dangers are real and grave there can be no doubt. Every study that has been made indicates that war marriages are more unstable and less permanent than marriages contracted during peace-time. Immediately after the last war the number of divorces rose at a more rapid rate than the rate of the previous decades. These divorces were unquestionably preceded and accompanied by an increase in the number of estrangements and separations. It would be unwise to ascribe these breakdowns to any one cause, just as unwise as it would be to



ascribe the breakdowns in peace-time to a single source of trouble. It is probable that all the causes and conditions that operate in peace-time to disrupt marriage operate in the postwar period with greater intensity and that, in addition, other conditions arise and other causes come into action. We therefore must not place all war marriages in one category. A more careful study of the war marriage, the marriage of a young woman to a young man who is about to be drafted or who is in the armed services, suggests that war marriages should be divided into at least four classes: one, the adolescent marriage; two, the hasty marriage; three, the foreign marriage; four, the ante-dated marriage. In some instances the marriage may belong to the first and second class, that is, it may be both adolescent and hasty, and in other cases the marriage may belong to the first, second, and third, that is, it may be an adolescent and hasty marriage of a young man from the United States to a young woman in a foreign country.

*The adolescent marriage* is the marriage in which one or both of the young people are too young, too immature to marry. We have learned that early marriages are not, as we once believed, among the most permanent and stable. Marriage today, in order to survive, demands maturity. Maturity means not only that the young people must be physically mature but that they must be mentally and emotionally and spiritually mature as well. And mental and emotional and spiritual maturity does not come with adolescence. In fact, a tremendous change takes place, as we have seen, in young people, and especially in young women, between the ages of seventeen or eighteen and twenty-two or twenty-three. There are a change in interest, a change in outlook, a change in standards and ideals, and certainly a change in the concept and meaning of marriage. What interests and fas-

cinates a young woman in her teens may cease to possess any interest or allurement whatever in her twenties. This is also true of the young man. It is this change that accounts for so many disappointments and disillusionments that occur during the early years of marriage. We must not forget that one-third of the divorces granted in the United States are granted during the first four or five years of marriage. The change in young people that occurs even in peace-time takes place with increasing speed and intensity under the forced growth of wartime. To this change must be added another factor, the reaction that always comes as the excitement of war subsides.

What can we do to prevent these adolescent marriages? Not much perhaps. The young people are moved by impulse and emotion and not by reason and foresight. To tell them that they are too young, that they are immature, only irritates and angers them. And still we must do our utmost to discourage these adolescent unions. Probably the wiser way is not to speak too much of immaturity and inexperience but rather to dwell upon the risks and dangers of war marriages, the risks that the young woman must assume and the dangers that the young man must face. If we can make these risks and dangers vivid enough, if we can picture them in all their stark reality, the young people may be persuaded to hesitate and to postpone their marriage. The parents also can aid us in what is really an emergency. But they cannot aid us by bluntly refusing their consent. The young man and the young woman may only rush off and marry without the consent of the parents. The course of action for the parents to take is to cooperate with us in the procedure that we decide to adopt. More important, however, than the parents may be an officer in the camp. The young soldier has as a rule a regard for his superior officer. He is accustomed to obey the command of the

officer; he accepts the discipline the officer imposes upon him and listens to the officer with great respect. The officer may not feel that he can intervene and prohibit the marriage, but he may and often will advise against it effectively.

*The hasty marriage* is the marriage in which two young people do not allow themselves sufficient time to know each other as they should. We have learned that it takes some months for a young man and a young woman to know each other, to know whether they possess the income that is needed, whether they are deeply attached to each other, whether they are temperamentally suited, whether they have interests in common that can be cultivated, whether they share the same standards and aspirations in life. In peace-time, we have discovered, the courtship should cover at least three months and the engagement period not less than three months more. If it takes six months for two people to decide wisely in peace-time, how is it possible for them to decide wisely in a month or a week or a day in wartime? In peace-time we have done everything we could to anticipate and to prevent the hasty and ill-considered marriage. We have amended the Marriage Law so as to require an interval of one day or three days or five days between the time of application for the marriage license and the time the ceremony can be performed. But in wartime we are suspending all these requirements and permitting marriages to be performed as they once were without delay or hindrance. The fact that a man is about to be inducted or is in uniform is taken as sufficient reason to waive all that we have learned about marriages in time of peace.

It is not difficult to understand the motives that move the young man and the young woman to enter into these hasty marriages. The young woman is filled with the excitement of the war period. She feels that she must do

something patriotic and sacrificial. She also has a secret fear that if she does not marry now she may never have the chance again. She allows her fears and her feelings to overcome her sense of caution and her intelligence. The young man also is filled with war excitement. He misses in the camp the association of women to which he is accustomed. He thinks that it will aid him to meet the demands of discipline and battle if he is married to a woman. He feels the need of some anchorage in life, some source of emotional security. Both the young people are caught up in the emotional whirl of hysteria. The future is so uncertain and dangerous—who knows what the morrow may bring? The time is short. Let us enjoy the few days we have left. This mood that borders on hysteria is not the mood in which to marry. When it passes, when the hysteria subsides and reason returns, the young people realize that they have been unwise. The truth is that they are not in a normal social setting; they do not as a result act as they would in a normal environment and in a normal frame of mind.

The least we can do in these cases is to do what we do in peace-time—discourage the marriage as far as we may. The difficulty is that we do not always have the cooperation of the parents. They also are affected by the hysteria of the time: "We do not approve of this hasty arrangement, but what right have we to interfere with our son's happiness? He is giving up so much, and we may always regret our refusal if anything happens to him." "We do not approve of this hasty ceremony, but what right have we to deny our daughter her own decision? She may be right. This may be her last chance." Even the chaplains in the camp and the clergymen in the communities are not always ready to cooperate with us. The truth is that not all ministers understand the foundations on which marriage must rest. They have had little training in the

problems of modern marriage, and some do not appreciate the responsibility that their strategic position imposes upon them. In addition to this, the chaplain is influenced by the camp environment. He loses sight of the larger aspects of marriage and yields too easily to the appeals of the men. The civil officer or the magistrate acts with even less caution and concern. The marriage license is all that he requires. He does not care to go back of the law. But just because all this is true, it is our duty to discourage as far as we can the marriage that is contracted in haste and to emphasize with all our power the unwisdom of conduct that no sensible or conscientious person would countenance in peace-time.

*The foreign marriage* is the marriage of an American soldier, for example, with a young woman in Iceland, Ireland, Australia, or India, or even China. These foreign marriages are really intermarriages, national, religious, and sometimes racial. They have all the disadvantages and involve all the dangers of the intermarriage contracted in peace-time, with this difference, that they are contracted with less thought and more impulsiveness. In some few cases these intermarriages will survive; but if experience is a guide, in most cases they will not. The reasons are evident and easily stated. The young man is born into one racial, religious, or national group, has one form of education, has acquired one set of preferences and prejudices, and has developed one outlook upon life and life's problems. The young woman is born into another group, has another form of education, has acquired another set of prejudices and preferences, and has developed another outlook on life and life's problems. How is it possible for these two persons with different cultural backgrounds, different psychological constitutions, different concepts and standards and ideals, to come together and establish that oneness of mind and to

achieve that union of spirit that is essential to marriage today? These differences that grow up in the course of years and that are deeply imbedded do not dissolve and disappear with the marriage ceremony.

We can understand, of course, why these intermarriages take place. The young man is far away from home. He is in a strange land, he is both lonesome and lonely, and he yearns for companionship and for comfort. The young woman is fascinated by the young soldier, who comes to aid her country; she is captivated by the new uniform, and she idealizes the heroic element in the situation. Both the young man and the young woman are attracted to each other by the novel and the strange. It is well known to psychologists that men and women are often attracted to each other by the unlike as well as by the like. But these are not safe foundations on which to build a permanent marriage. Neither the nostalgia in the young man nor the fascination felt by the young woman nor the curious interest in the unlike survives for any length of time. In fact, they fade faster than many suppose. Then the differences in language, in customs, in attitudes, in subconscious motivations begin to assert themselves. Then come the misunderstandings, the dissensions, the antagonisms, the hostilities that inevitably result in wretchedness, suffering, and disruption. If children come, they only complicate the problem and introduce additional centers of discord and new sources of bitterness. This is what we have seen happen again and again in both wartime and peace-time.

What can we do to discourage and to prevent these foreign marriages? Probably not very much. The young man is away from home and without the influence of the family and friends that would ordinarily protect him. The young woman is in a position of advantage and is in many cases encouraged by her parents and friends. We

can, however, picture as forcibly as possible all the handicaps and hazards of a marriage of this character and urge the young man to consider all the consequences that must be faced when the war ends. But without the cooperation of the chaplains and the military authorities it is not likely that we shall be able to accomplish what we wish. In the judgment of some counselors the military authorities should intervene in all cases where the marriage is unwise, that is, in the adolescent marriage, the hasty marriage, and the foreign marriage. The military authorities have the power. The young man is under military direction and discipline, and the superior officers may prohibit what they believe to be unwise for the soldier and disadvantageous to the welfare of the army. Yet they do not wish to exercise their authority and to interfere in these matters, for they think that marriage is a private affair and that the decision should be left to the young people. If they could be advised by a marriage counselor, if they could be guided by a man or woman trained and experienced in this field, the probabilities are that they would employ the power they possess and act in accordance with the counsel given them.

*The ante-dated marriage* is the marriage that would normally take place in peace-time but that takes place earlier because of the draft or the exigencies of war. In these cases the young man and the young woman have known each other for months or even years. They are well acquainted and are merely advancing the date of their marriage. The foundations of marriage in these cases are as secure as in any marriage in peace-time, that is, the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical foundations. There is no reason why we should discourage these marriages. On the contrary, there is every reason why we should cooperate with the young man and the young woman in planning out their marriage

program. This may mean many things. Where shall the ceremony take place? In the camp, in the community near the camp, or in the home town of the bride? Where is the bride to live? In the community near the camp or in her own home with her own family or with the family of the young man? Should the bride work? Should they have a child at once? How should they maintain their relationship to each other while they are separated? How should they assure themselves that when the war is over, they will not meet as strangers? These are some of the questions that it is our duty to discuss with them, and there are probably many more.

The answers to these questions will not be the same in every case, since cases differ. But for the large majority of cases experience seems to indicate the counsel we should give. If it is possible for the young man to secure a leave, it is much better to have the ceremony in the home town of the bride rather than in the camp or a near-by community. The members of the families can then be present, and the wedding is made as near normal as possible. If it is possible for the bride to live in a community near the camp, there is every reason why she should do so until her husband leaves for duty overseas. This is especially true if the young man is an officer, who is allowed to live outside the camp. When the husband leaves, there is of course only one thing for the bride to do, and that is to return to her own community. In some cases, perhaps in most, it is necessary for the young woman to work in order to maintain herself. But even if this is not necessary, it is best for her to engage in some occupation either as a volunteer or as a salaried worker. The nearer the work is to the war enterprise the better, for she will then feel that she too is aiding in winning the war, that in some measure she is taking the place of her husband whose services are needed at the front. In other



wars the women have worked and done what they could to serve the men in the Army or the Navy and to substitute for the men at home. In a total war they surely cannot do less.

Whether the couple should have a child at once or postpone the coming of the child until after the war is a question that must be answered in accordance with the circumstances of each case. If the two young people desire a child, if the woman is well, if she is able to maintain herself and her child, even without the aid of her husband, then there is no reason why the child should not come. In fact, the child may be an additional bond, another reason for maintaining the right mode of life and a source of strength and comfort to both the young woman and the young man. More important than this question, however, is the next. How can we prepare ourselves to meet each other when the war at last comes to an end? Letters will help, letters that are intimate and filled with the daily doings of each one, letters that keep each other informed of the experiences of life, letters that are not essays but wholehearted and soul-free revelations of what is taking place within the young man and the young woman, letters that are reassuring, firm in conviction and courage, and aglow with faith. But there is something more that these young people can do, and that is to live from day to day in the presence of each other, even though they are separated. They can cultivate as far as possible those qualities that they prize in each other. They can cherish together, even though thousands of miles apart, the radiant ideal of their marriage and cherish this so deeply and so tenderly that it will illumine every act, every word, every thought of both the man and the woman and so bind them closer together.

But even though we cooperate with the young people in this type of war marriage, we still must not fail to

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counsel them in regard to the risks and dangers in all types of war marriages. In the first place, the young woman must realize that when she is married, she is expected to resign herself to the restrictions and limitations of her position. She cannot accept invitations or entertainment from other men. She must conduct herself as a married woman. She must also understand that if she and her husband decide not to have a child, a child may come in spite of every precaution they may take, since there is no method of contraception that is absolutely certain. In the second place, both the young man and the young woman must realize that the young man may return crippled or shellshocked or maimed or may not return at all. These facts must be faced and faced frankly. And both the young man and the young woman must also recognize that, notwithstanding all that they may resolve and all that they may do, great changes may come to one or the other or both. They will separate soon after their wedding for an indefinite length of time. They will have no opportunity to accommodate and to adjust themselves to each other, no chance to develop that mutual understanding and comradeship so important to marriage at all times and especially in times of stress. This is the counsel that we must give; yet the decision to marry must be made not by us but by the young people. They may feel, as many do, that if their love is deep and sincere, it will survive the war, and if it is not, it is better that no marriage take place.

In all cases of war marriages special problems may appear in the legal, economic, biological, psychological, or ethical areas. Not infrequently legal complications develop because of the Marriage Law of the state in which the ceremony is to be performed. These complications cannot be anticipated, but it is important to be sure that the marriage is legal and valid. It is important, for

example, to ascertain whether there has been a prior marriage, whether the husband or wife is still living, and, if so, whether a divorce has been properly secured. We must not forget that there are many grounds upon which marriages can be annulled. Not infrequently, too, economic questions arise, matters of transportation, the temporary home of the couple, the needs of the family of one or the other party to the contract, the provision that must be made for the young woman and the allowances to which she is entitled as the wife of a man in service. These needs must be carefully considered in cooperation not only with the young people but with the social and governmental agencies concerned. Not infrequently, also, conditions of heredity and health appear in the case. These conditions it is most important to discuss not only with the young people but with an expert. The danger is that these conditions may appear less important in wartime and be waived or excused altogether in view of the urgency of the marriage. Health conditions that make marriage inadvisable in peace-time make marriage doubly inadvisable in wartime.

We must not forget, likewise, that psychological factors may present serious problems. The uncertainty, the uneasiness, the apprehensiveness, the actual fear that are a part of the general war psychology may take acute possession of the young woman. In the midst of widespread war hysteria she may suffer not only a loss of poise and peace of mind but even mental and emotional disturbances that unless expertly treated may develop into some grave form of neurosis or psychosis. Many young men are being discharged from the Army as neurotic or psychoneurotic cases solely because they are unable to stand the strain of army routine and army discipline. These men are being returned to civilian life for proper care and treatment. But little attention is being given

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to the young woman who may become the victim of the war as well as her husband. These problems are not easily solved in a short time and may greatly mar the marriage itself. Most disturbing of all are the ethical questions that so often surge to the surface. Is this right, or is this wrong? In times of war the sense of right and wrong becomes confused, and values lose their customary meaning. Men and women are not sure of their own codes or of their own convictions. They therefore need more than at any other time the guidance and counsel of someone who will attempt to aid them to see things clearly and to see them whole, someone whose ethical sense is steady and firm and high, someone who realizes that we may compromise in the matter of plans and policies but that it is exceedingly dangerous to compromise with the ethical principles that must govern married life.

### INTERMARRIAGE

Intermarriage is another subject in which young people are often interested; but it is not a simple subject. It means much more than the formal wedding ceremony of two people one of whom comes from one group and one of whom comes from another. In the first place, the intermarriage may be racial, that is, the marriage of two people who come from different racial groups such as the Negro and the White; or it may be religious, that is, the marriage of two people who come from different religious groups such as the Catholic and the Jewish; or it may be national, that is, the marriage of two people who come from two national groups such as the Italian and the German; or it may even be social in character, such as the marriage of two people who come from two different cultural and economic groups, one uncouth and uncultivated, the other cultivated and refined. The truth is that we know few facts about intermarriage in

America, since the marriage license does not indicate the racial or religious or national affiliation of the bride and bridegroom. No scientific study has thus far been made to determine the outcome in a group of intermarriages as compared with the outcome in a group of marriages between two people of the same race, religion, nationality, or social class.

The objection to intermarriage cannot be based upon biological evidence, for no such evidence exists even today. Social scientists, in fact, are inclined to believe that the intermarriage of races, especially, strengthens rather than weakens the racial stock. It is a fact, well known, that in certain sections of the country a low breed of men and women issue out of mixed marriages. But a more thorough study of these cases proves that the mongrel type is due not to the mixture of races but to the inferior type of representatives of either one or both of the racial groups. Whenever intermarriage takes place between highly developed representatives of different races, the children have been of superior quality. This has been established over and over again in the intermarriages between Europeans and Asiatics and Asiatics and Americans. The same conclusion must be reached in a discussion of intermarriage between religious and national and social groups. There is no biological evidence available to prove that the children that issue from an intermarriage of representatives of different religious, national, and social groups are of a lower physical or mental grade than their parents. Some anthropologists and eugenists say that intermarriage does not weaken but strengthens the group. They even maintain that too close an inbreeding may result in a deterioration of both the individual and the group itself. The utmost we can say in our present stage of knowledge is that the objection to intermarriage cannot safely rest on biological grounds.

The chief objection to intermarriage is psychological. Psychological factors and consequences are not only important; they are serious and sometimes fatal, though the man and woman may not recognize this fact until it is too late. In an intermarriage one party to the contract comes out of one racial, religious, national, or social group; has had one form of education; has acquired one set of prejudices and preferences and as a result has one outlook upon life and life's problems. The other party to the contract comes out of another racial, religious, national, or social group; has had another form of education; has acquired another set of prejudices and preferences and has another outlook on life and life's problems. It is impossible for these two people who differ so greatly in background, in psychical constitution, in attitudes, and in cultural possessions to come together and to establish that kinship of spirit and that oneness of comradeship that is of the very essence of marriage. Group loyalties and group relationships may in some cases be so weakened that it is possible for both the man and the woman to establish a life together on a new but not necessarily on a higher level. The differences that are deeply rooted in human nature, however, the relationships that are the result of a lifetime, the loyalties that are cultivated in the course of years are not easy to overcome, and to say the least they constitute a hazard to happiness in married life. These differences may be suppressed for a time, but eventually they will reassert themselves and become a source of disturbance and distress.

It must also not be forgotten that intermarriage involves more than the man and the woman, the husband and the wife. It involves two other factors that cannot be dismissed beyond the boundaries of human relationships, that is, the families of the couple and the children

that may issue from the marriage. Even if the families themselves do not clash and cause disturbance and suffering, there is still a price to pay, and sometimes the price is exceedingly high. One or the other or perhaps both families may seriously object to the marriage and may be deeply hurt if the young man or woman disregards the feelings of the mother and the father. The young people may believe that their own happiness is more important than the wishes of their parents; but it is extremely difficult, even impossible, for a young man and especially for a young woman to separate himself or herself from the family of which he or she has been a part for so long. Hours will come, hours of sickness, of joy, of trial, of sorrow when the young man and, even more, the young woman will want the members of the family near. The young people must reckon with this contingency, and so must the families. One thing families certainly must not do is to alienate their children. Not even the hours of reconciliation that takes place from time to time can altogether erase the weeks and months of unhappiness. Young people should do their utmost not to offend their parents, and parents should also do their utmost not to lose the love of their children.

It is often asserted that the number of sterile intermarriages is greater than the number of sterile marriages between members of the same group; and it is also often stated that the number of children in intermarriages is smaller than in marriages between men and women of the same race, religion, nation, and social status. This assertion is based upon observation and not upon scientific studies and conclusions. But there are sufficient children born of intermarriages to create a serious problem. In fact, every child born of an intermarriage suffers under handicaps that are evident even to the untrained layman. Both parents may agree not to discuss

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religion among themselves or with their children, but both children and parents will live in constant fear that someone will discuss religion with them. Religion becomes to them not a source of sustainment and inspiration but a cause of fear and unfaith. They do not seek but rather shun all religious services and associations. In families in which prejudices of the parents are latent these prejudices will rush to the surface in times of stress and will lead to invective and bitterness. The effect of intermarriage in these cases upon the child or children is not only distressing; it is disastrous. What is true of religious intermarriages is also true to a greater or lesser degree of marriages between members of different racial, national, and social groups.

### DIVORCE

Divorce is a dismal subject to discuss with young people who are about to be married. But two conditions warrant the introduction of this subject: one, not infrequently the man or the woman has been divorced and wishes now to remarry; two, one-third of the divorces granted in the United States are granted during the first four or five years of married life. This fact indicates the need for caution on the part of a marriage counselor. There are instances no doubt in which divorce is the only solution of a marital problem. Some marriages are consummated that never should have been even considered. Some marriages rest upon foundations that are weak and inadequate; in some marriages the fire dies out upon the altar, and the shrine is desecrated. When a man and a woman no longer trust each other, when they have lost faith in each other's integrity, when the last lingering regard and love for each other is dead, it is useless to attempt to rebuild married life, and there is no other solution but dissolution. For there is nothing so humili-



ating to a man as to live with a woman he does not love, and there is nothing so degrading to a woman as to live with a man that she does not love. No disappointment could be greater than this; yet it is too frequent a human experience to be ignored by those who are concerned with the problems of life and with ethical principles and their implications.

But it is most important to emphasize the fact that the outward break is not always the evidence of an inward and irreparable breach. It may be true that the man and the woman are emotionally upset by accumulated irritations, that they are mentally confused by recurrent conflicts and antagonisms, that they are temporarily blinded by their own unhappiness. It may be, in other words, that beneath all the discord and conflict there is still a remnant of the old relationship. Where this is found, it is still possible under expert guidance to rekindle love, to reawaken trust, to restore the faith that may save both the man and the woman from unnecessary disaster and unwarranted divorce. The pain and suffering and agony, the sense of loneliness and desolation that so often accompanies and follows divorce are proof of the fact that love is not always dead and waiting to be buried by the action of the court. It is rather a proof of the fact that love is only deeply wounded and is eagerly waiting to be healed. These are the words in which young people should be warned. For it is evident that too many young people act upon impulse and only some time later realize the tragic mistake they have made. The dream of romance may turn into a nightmare of discord and disruption. But divorce itself should be postponed until every other possibility has been explored and tried.

Another point to emphasize is that the legal cause of divorce or the causes assigned in the legal document are no indication of the true cause of the tragedy. Men and

woman who decide to separate temporarily or permanently agree with their lawyer upon the cause in the Divorce Law that will facilitate the separation or divorce. Each state, it must not be forgotten, has its own law and specifies the causes of divorce that the state will recognize. The state of South Carolina has no Divorce Law whatever and grants no divorce on any ground. The result is that the residents of the state of South Carolina who wish to be divorced must establish residence in another state. In the state of New York there is only one ground for divorce, that is, the ground of infidelity or adultery. The result is that men and women who wish to be divorced must either seek release in some other state or resort to another method that has become a scandal in both legal and social life. The man and woman disguise or conceal the real cause of their difficulty and arrange through their lawyer to meet the requirements of the law. This, of course, is collusion and therefore illegal. Other states have more liberal divorce laws, laws that allow divorce on a number of grounds such as desertion, cruelty, drunkenness, impotency at the time of marriage, willful neglect to provide for one year, and conviction of felony or infamous crime as well as infidelity or adultery. It is necessary, therefore, in order to discover the truth to study the cause or causes that lie behind the decision to end the marriage relationship.

Students of marriage and divorce problems are now definitely of the opinion that the major causes of divorce may be found in one or more of several conditions. One, lack of proper preparation for marriage and family life. This undoubtedly makes it difficult for young people to cope with the problems of marriage and family life. How inadequately young people are really equipped to understand and to meet the problems that arise especially in the early years of marriage is evident to every phy-

sician, minister, and lawyer. Hence the importance, even the necessity, of marriage counseling and better preparation. Two, weaknesses and defects in the very foundations on which marriage and family life must rest. The old foundations, that is, the power of the parent, the sacrament of religion, and the contract of a state, no longer serve as a basis on which to build. Young people must realize from the outset the importance and even the necessity of the new foundations, that is, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical as well as the legal. Three, low standards of marriage and irresponsibility in husband and wife. Too many young men and women think of marriage as an experiment or enter upon it as a lighthearted adventure. As a result of their secular studies and the altogether secular spirit of the age they come to think of marriage as a purely secular association or institution. They forget the sacredness and the sanctities of married life and the spiritual ideals that alone can save them in times of stress and dissension. Unless they cherish marriage as a hallowing and holy experience, their marriage is doomed from the beginning.

One of the most frequent causes of failure, however, is the lack of proper counsel and guidance in time of need. Young men and women should at the earliest possible moment be made acquainted with the fact that consultation centers are being established in many communities and that they may now secure expert advice from a staff that is competent to discuss marital problems with them on the basis of scientific training and wide experience. The time to seek counsel and guidance is in the incipient or early stages of the trouble and not when the trouble has progressed to the acute or chronic or incurable stage. Again and again we are compelled to ask the question, "Why have you come to see me so

late?" After five or ten or fifteen years of growing discord and estrangement the damage done is so great that the basis on which marriage can be reconstructed is destroyed beyond all repair. Men and women as a result of the movement of health education have come to understand two things, that it is dangerous to attempt to diagnose their own trouble and that they should consult a doctor when the symptoms first appear. They are therefore not accustomed to wait until disease completely undermines their health. Men and women must now learn as a result of education for marriage and family life that there is no disgrace in consulting experts—doctors, lawyers, ministers, family counselors; the disgrace lies, on the contrary, in not consulting men and women who will be able to aid them and to save their marriage.

## *Part II*

### FAMILY COUNSELING

#### CHAPTER 9

#### THE APPROACH

The approach to the problems of marriage and family life is often exceedingly difficult. The men and women who come to us seeking counsel and guidance are as a rule disturbed, distressed, and bewildered. Most of these men and women hope for and even expect a confirmation of their own opinion and position in the case, and they are disappointed when we venture to disagree or disapprove. They want us to know the facts that appear important to them, but in their oversensitive and sometimes excited state they are inclined to resent questioning and investigation. They ask us for our decision, but they do not wish us to impose our own judgment upon them. They secretly and even openly resist a too-evident display of authority. These attitudes are altogether explicable in men and women who have become estranged from each other, and each attitude reveals the need for service.

If we are to serve the men and women who come to us for consultation, it is necessary to recognize the needs of each case and to cultivate an approach that will win confidence and cooperation. In any work with men and women who are in trouble it is essential to understand that they ask at least three things in us: sympathy, understanding, expertness. Without sympathy it is

impossible to generate the warmth of interest and feeling that will encourage their confidence; without understanding it is impossible to appreciate all the factors that enter into and cause the distress; without the expertness that comes with training, experience, and deepening insight it is impossible to make a diagnosis, to plan out a program of treatment, and to know what other agencies it is necessary to call into action. In marriage and family counseling, however, there are other elements that we must cultivate and incorporate into our own attitude and approach.

In this work as in all work that involves human relationships we must learn to take what may be called the *long view*. Most of us have a natural desire to speed up processes and to secure results quickly. This is especially true in these days when we are contracting space and condensing time. But only the inexperienced will be impatient with men and women in distress. We soon discover that there are no sudden cures and that it takes time to accomplish permanent changes in any one person and certainly in two persons and their relationships with each other. Even the simplest illness takes a reasonable time for recovery and especially for convalescence. How much longer must it take when the disease is deep-seated and serious! Every physician knows that a case of incipient tuberculosis will take six months or more to bring the case to an arrested stage, that it will take even longer to restore the patient to normal activity and working capacity, and that the patient must be kept under observation for an indefinite length of time if a relapse is to be averted. It is true that in the field of medicine newly discovered drugs such as the sulfa groups and new techniques are performing miracles, but even these miracles require time and are followed by consequences that need to be carefully watched.

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On the psychological and ethical level we possess no agencies and have developed no techniques that can achieve even such miracles as are wrought in the realm of medicine. There are no sudden conversions or transformations of character. Every case of apparently sudden change in personality is preceded by a long period of preparation of which the person himself may even be unaware. Some of the problems that we meet in the field of marriage and family relationships arise from weaknesses and defects that are comparatively simple, and the solution may not take an unreasonable length of time to work out and to establish. If the man and woman are estranged solely because of a disagreement over the expenditure of funds, as not infrequently happens, it is not difficult to instruct this couple in the principles and practice of budget making, though even this simple procedure requires time and patience and persuasion. For some men and women and especially young people have little if any understanding of the items that enter into a modern budget and the relative importance of each item. Budget making is an art and must be studied under the guidance of those who have mastered all the material that is available.

But most of the problems that come to us are due to causes that lie deep and that arise out of conditions that have continued to fester over a considerable period of time. It takes days and weeks and sometimes months to assemble all the facts and to teach the man and the woman to see conditions clearly, to recognize the causes, and to understand the consequences. It takes even longer to aid them to outgrow old habits, wrong attitudes, and irritating relationships; to overcome weaknesses, to correct defects, and to heal wounds, especially if they have suffered for want of adequate understanding and care. Those of us who have endeavored to curb appar-

ently simple traits in our make-up, not to speak of the more serious trends in our psychical constitution, those of us who have striven to cultivate new ways of thinking and new manners of expression realize the necessity of being patient with human nature and with its struggle to reconstruct itself. We realize the necessity, in other words, of taking the long view in work with men and women whose distress is due to aggravated ulcers in their spiritual life.

A second element that must enter into our attitude and be incorporated into our approach is the *open mind*. Most of us think that we have minds sensitive enough to record all impressions that impinge upon us and open enough to receive all the facts in every case. But the truth is that most of us have developed what might be termed the kodak type of mind. The kodak, even when it takes an accurate impression of the object through a perfect lens, can do no more than take a two-dimensional picture, and, more important than this, the impression that it takes is nothing but the picture of the moment. Most minds are unfortunately of this type. They take a picture, and that picture remains not only the first but the last impression. It does not change as conditions change from hour to hour and day to day. We enter a room, for example, this afternoon, and our eye takes a picture of the room as it is, and this picture is stored up in the mind. Tomorrow morning we may enter the same room, and, unless the change in the arrangements of the furniture or the color of the walls is great, we do not note the change until our attention is called to it. We meet each other from day to day and do not note the changes that strangers see who meet us only at intervals. This is a common and universal experience.

In all work with men and women and certainly in work that involves not one but two or more individuals



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and their subtle reactions and relationships, this kodak type of mind is almost fatal. If doctors or nurses do not note the changes that take place in the patient from day to day, even from hour to hour, they may lose the patient, and some do. If the lawyer does not note the changes that take place on the face of the judge and on the faces of the jury from moment to moment, he may lose the case, and some lawyers do. The same thing is true in the field of marriage and family counseling. Men and women change constantly. They decline or they improve, they retrogress or they advance, they have spurts and spasms of progress that are bewildering, and they suffer relapses and losses that are exceedingly baffling. Every meeting with them brings new facts to the surface and new information into the foreground. If our minds are open and alert, this information concerning the men and women who consult us and these facts concerning the problems with which we are wrestling will impress themselves upon us and awaken new interest and attentiveness.

Instead of the kodak type of mind it is wise to cultivate what might for want of a better term be called the motion-picture-film type of mind. This type of mind records instantly and accurately and continuously the changes that take place not only in the individual but in the case as a whole. Is the man more depressed or more cheerful than at the last meeting? Is the woman more discouraged or more hopeful? Are the two more or less nervous or agitated? Is the tone of voice of the husband any different when he speaks to his wife; is it more harsh or more tender? Is the woman's appearance any different when she meets her husband again; does she try to look her best, or does she not care? Is there more or less tension, antagonism, bitterness, hostility in the meeting today than there was last time? These

and a hundred other changes need to be noted and recorded. But even when they are noted and recorded, the film cannot be rolled up and filed away, not as long as the case is open and under our care. It must remain unwound and spread out before us, not only in order that we may study and compare the changes that occur but in order that we may learn to interpret the changes and to evaluate them correctly. This is what makes work with men and women and families vitally interesting and never tedious and monotonous.

A third factor and a most important one is the *personal element*. In every conference with the men and women who come to us we must keep in mind our own peculiar personality, and some of us are very peculiar. Few of us are so constituted that we can see all things as they are and see them whole. Some of us are temperamentally optimistic, and some are temperamentally pessimistic even as are our clients. Some of us are accustomed to minimize difficulties, and some of us are inclined to exaggerate every situation. When we say, "It is raining outside," we say it with such exaggerated emphasis that it sounds like a thunderstorm. Some of us are warm and intimate in our approach and encourage confidence almost immediately. Others are cold and distant, and people hesitate to speak to us freely. Some of us are hurt by criticism even of those who come to consult us; and some of us, we must admit, are susceptible to praise. Some of the ablest men we know are influenced in their judgment by the incense of adulation; it is the very breath of their nostrils and so stimulates them that they lose both their clearness of vision and their balance of mind. These are serious weaknesses against which men and women must guard themselves in counseling others.

Another peculiarity that is not uncommon is the inability of some men and women to see things except

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in terms of the microscope. The microscope is an invaluable and an indispensable instrument in science, but it has its limitations that we must recognize. In the first place, the microscope admits only a small part of the object under the lens, and, in the second place, it magnifies the small part out of all proportion to the rest. These are dangerous limitations in work with men and women. One social worker discovered that the mother of a family under her care had misstated the facts. A falsehood is unfortunate and an indication of weakness, but it must not be magnified to such a degree that it completely obscures the whole case of distress, and certainly it must not be allowed to prejudice the worker against the case under her care. The falsehood, in fact, becomes a part of the case for treatment. Another worker found it exceedingly difficult to work with the father of a family solely because he was unclean in his habits. Uncleanliness is unpleasant, but the worker cannot allow his or her own sensitiveness to magnify this unpleasant trait to the point that makes it impossible for us to do the work that needs to be done. Unclean habits form a part of the case itself and must be included within the plan of treatment.

Others of us, to change the figure of speech and the symbol of the instrument, are accustomed to see things through the wrong end of the opera glass. We often see men and women at too great a distance. When we talk with these workers and counselors, we have the feeling that the people they describe and the distress they discuss are far-off objects, that there is no real contact between the worker and the people they assume to serve. In truth, some of us often speak as if the pictures we see upon the screen and the men and women we read about in books were more vivid and real to us than the persons with whom we associate from day to day and with

whom we work. We seem to suffer from a sense of unreality. We must learn to bring people near to us, to see them sitting in our very presence. They must be so near that we can see the flush of the cheek, the throb of the throat, the twitch of the finger, so near that we can even sense the things that they leave unsaid and the sorrows that they cannot easily express in speech.

We must remember also that like all men and women we are influenced and affected by temporary and even transitory physical, emotional, and mental conditions. There are times when we are overstrained and fatigued and irritable. It is not difficult in reading case reports to discover whether the notes were made in the morning when the worker was fresh and interested or whether the notes were made late in the afternoon when the worker was weary and could not fully concentrate upon the case. Industrial experts know that there is a point beyond which efficiency begins to decline and production to decrease. In some occupations this is eight hours and in others it may be six or even less. Marriage and family counselors are not exempt from the influences of overwork and intense application. When we realize this fact, we understand why it is that some of the evidence escapes us in the course of our interview, why it is that we lapse in interest as the conference proceeds, and why we become impatient with men and women. It is not an unwise practice to take a few moments of rest before each consultation. This gives us time to recover our own poise and powers.

There are also times when we do not feel well ourselves, when a spell of indigestion or an attack of headache or just a spasm of pain in some other part of the body disturbs us; and there are times when we are upset by a previous interview or distracted by some acute personal experience. These conditions always

affect our manner, our approach, and even our interpretation of the facts. But it is very unfair to allow our own inward state to determine our manner and to interfere with our perception of the case; it is also unfair to allow our irritation or disappointment with Mrs. A to express itself in our approach to Mr. B. A very able physician, able both as a diagnostician and a therapist, makes the mistake of rushing from a patient in one room to other patients in a second room and a third room. He is too busy to take time between examinations. The danger is that we may not recognize our own temporary state of mind or emotion or body and that we may not always realize and appreciate our own peculiarities. It is most important, however, that we subtract our own temporary state and our own peculiarities from the impression of the case. We must observe this rule: "I will not allow anything on the inside to prejudice me against things on the outside." Prejudice means to prejudge.

A fourth lesson that we must learn is the *art of accommodation*. It is not always easy to accommodate ourselves to the different types of men and women who come to us, to adjust ourselves to the different moods in which they bring and present their problems. It may seem a trivial thing even to mention, but the truth is that appearance and dress count for much in this work. Many physicians and lawyers have learned that professionalism in attire is obsolete, and so have many ministers. But they have also learned not to neglect their appearance. It is interesting to listen to the comments that men and women make about those they consult in any profession. "She looks too mannish for a woman." "She is overdressed for her role." "He is very slovenly in his appearance." "He dresses too much like an undertaker," which even undertakers do not do today. It might be well for

advisers and counselors to refresh themselves after each interview and to prepare themselves for the next conference. I heard one worker say to a client, "You do not look very neat. You do not seem to take any pride in your appearance." The client looked at the worker and said quietly, "Neither do you."

More important than dress, however, is the tone of the voice. There is no reason for assuming that because people are in distress they are therefore hard of hearing. And yet in some social agencies and in some professional offices men and women speak to each other with unnecessary emphasis and volume. Most of the people who come to us are disturbed and distraught. A well-modulated voice helps to calm and to comfort them. The very tone of our voice as we greet men and women, as they enter our room, may express our interest and desire to assist them; or it may express our indifference and our impatience. It is not necessary to be soft and saccharine in order to be sympathetic; nor is it necessary to be harsh and gruff in order to be firm. The range and the power of the human voice is exceedingly great, as singers and public speakers have learned. But few know how to employ speech effectively in private practice, whether it be in medicine, law, or family counseling. Perhaps the best commentary is this comment of a client: "I could tell from his very voice that he had a personal interest in me and that he understood my problem." It is well to remember that just as a musician tunes his instrument after each piece so we must learn to tune our voice after each meeting for the next interview.

Even more important than our attire and voice is the manner that we cultivate. Some of us unfortunately become fixed and formal and official in our manner. A committee of educated and intelligent men and women once called upon a psychiatrist. They wanted to discuss

with him a program of work in the field of mental hygiene. He was helpful in the course of the conference, but after the meeting every member of the committee expressed the same feeling: "He treated all of us as if we were psychiatric cases." I recall hearing one of the great preachers of America preach the same sermon three times, the first time in his house of worship, the second time before a large women's organization, and the third time in a university chapel. It was the same sermon, but each time his manner changed. He knew how to accommodate himself to different conditions, to different environments, and to different groups of people. Because of his ability to accommodate himself he succeeded in each instance, whereas I have heard other men fail because of their inability to adjust themselves to different audiences.

In discussing personal problems one must be personal in his manner, this is true. But it is not necessary to be intimate, and it is most unwise to become familiar. Most people resent an invasion of their privacy. In attempting to learn the facts and assemble the evidence that we need in order to make a diagnosis we must necessarily be searching in our inquiry. But we must not be too inquisitive. Most people resent "investigations" made in a detective spirit. It is altogether possible to be informal without being familiar, and it is not difficult to be democratic in our manner without losing prestige or authority. Most men and women appreciate this manner of approach, but what they appreciate most of all is an earnest concern with their own problems. The problems may seem very unimportant to us, but they must appear important to them; otherwise, our counsel and guidance would not be sought. One statesman in the field of social work cautioned his students in these words: "The least we can assume when a man comes to us is that he

believes himself to be in need of service." Men and women want to feel when they consult us that we are laying aside all other interests and focusing our whole mind upon their own particular problem. Unless we succeed in doing this, we may misunderstand the problem and mislead our clients.

The fifth point and perhaps the most important of all that we must keep in mind is that we are working with *human material*. It may sound repetitious and superfluous to emphasize the fact that in marriage and family counseling we are serving men and women and children or, to put it more concretely, that we are working with a man or a woman or a child. But it is neither superfluous nor repetitious. There is always present the danger that in the course of time we may forget this all-important fact and come to think of our clients as merely clinical material, as so many cases, or worst of all, as mere commodities and so much merchandise. There can be no objection to the scientific spirit and to experimentation even in this highly specialized field. On the contrary, every man and woman with scientific interest and with training in social research will inevitably study clients carefully, experiment with different methods, and watch and analyze the results. But the men and women that we serve cannot be treated as chemicals that have no feeling or as mice that have no control over their own affairs and destiny. It is altogether possible to engage in our work with scientific interest and detachment and still not forget that human beings are of infinite value and that every personality is precious and is to be preserved and respected.

There is less danger, we must recognize, that the lawyer and the doctor will lose sight of the fact that they are working with human material, less danger, at least, in their personal practice. It is true that in the legal aid



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bureau and in the court, in the dispensary and in the hospital doctors and lawyers see too many cases, and the contact is too casual and too infrequent to awaken personal interest except in special instances. But in their own private practice it is necessary to establish a personal relationship between their clients and themselves. The case worker with a heavy case load and a contact that is not close and continuous constantly runs the risk of becoming impersonal and mechanical. From this stage it is not a long step to the next, to the stage of treating clients as mere commodities and so many bundles of merchandise. We know our people should follow certain courses of action that we believe to be right. And we think that because they should, they will do so. But sometimes these men and women will not do what we believe to be best for them, for reasons that may be obscure to themselves and certainly illogical to us. There is no way in which this conduct on their part can be overcome. We simply have to recognize the fact that we cannot tag men and women and express them to a distant point that we select, as we do a box of food or a package of clothing.

The very fact that men and women are in trouble, that they are in distress and suffering, makes it all the more necessary to remember that they are human beings. Even though they may not act in a normal manner, even though they may look distracted and disheveled, they still belong to the same species to which we belong. They are made of the same bone, the same muscles, the same nerves; they are frightened by the same fears and terrified by the same dreads, sustained by the same hopes and dreams and aspirations, comforted by the same companionship, and soothed by the same sympathy as are we. Shakespeare was right in the great speech of Shylock. Even those who are unlike ourselves in many

ways are "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer." If the same thing happened to us as happens to them, how should we react? In the same way? Perhaps not exactly. "Sorrow, like water, takes the shape of the vessel into which it is poured." But we are all fashioned of the same human material with all its weaknesses and imperfections and also with all its possibilities and unsuspected powers. When we remain keenly and acutely aware of this fact, we not only feel a fellowship with those we serve but are supported in our service by the incredible and recurrent miracles of the human spirit, the power of men and women to redeem and to reestablish themselves.

## CHAPTER 10

### ASSEMBLING THE EVIDENCE

In order to discover the cause of distress, that is, to make a diagnosis, it is necessary, first of all, to assemble the evidence in the case. This is not a simple and easy task. On the contrary, it is often time-consuming and wearisome and baffling. Every endeavor to gather the facts in service with men and women is difficult, and this is especially true in the field of marriage and family counseling. The very nature of the problems in marriage and family relationships makes the work doubly difficult. In the first place, we may find that the evidence is insufficient. Not only may many sources of evidence be closed to us, but those sources upon which we may draw are frequently limited. This leaves us with a feeling of uncertainty in drawing conclusions. In the second place, the evidence that we do accumulate may prove to be faulty. The statements that we secure may be only partially true, or they may be greatly exaggerated, or they may prove to be altogether irrelevant and unreliable. If the evidence is faulty or insufficient, this means that the diagnosis will necessarily be incorrect. If the diagnosis is incorrect, the treatment, it is clear, cannot be wisely conceived or adequately planned.

It will assist us in assembling the evidence if we fix in our mind the main points that we want to know and that we must understand. One important point is the *origin* of the trouble. When and where and how did the trouble begin? This seems a simple question, but it is surprising to

discover how few men and women realize when the trouble actually began and where and how. Most of them date the beginning of their distress from some recent incident or episode. This recent incident or episode may be only the latest experience in a long series of similar occurrences. Or it may be only the climax of an intricate development the very nature of which the man or woman did not recognize or understand. Most men and women, too, do not remember where the trouble first appeared. They may think that it first appeared at a dance or a party, and they may for a time forget the earlier expression of the trouble that appeared in their home and in the midst of their family life. Most men and women also are not sure of how the misunderstanding or estrangement came about. They may at first insist that it began with a quarrel over some important matter such as the school the child was to attend, whereas upon investigation we may discover that the trouble really began with a forgotten discussion regarding the child's education and future. In other words, men and women are as a rule unaware of the origin of their own distress.

Let me illustrate. A boy of eighteen was arrested for breaking into a store. His mother was interviewed. "Is this the first time your son has been in trouble?" "Yes, he has never been in trouble before." "Did you have any difficulty with him when he was about twelve or fourteen?" "Well, yes, he was a little difficult at that age." "How did he behave as a child?" "He was a rather nervous child and often he had tantrums." This is a common experience in work with delinquents. It is also common in marriage and family counseling. Here is one couple married for fifteen years. "What trouble brings you to see me?" "We have been quarreling for the last six months, and we have reached the point where something must be done." "Did your trouble really begin only

six months ago?" "I am afraid not," said the wife; "five years ago I left my husband for a few weeks." "Did you have any conflicts soon after your marriage?" "Yes, we had, and sometimes they were rather bitter." "During the time you were engaged, did you have any misunderstandings?" "Now that you remind us of it, we did. In fact, we nearly broke our engagement at one time." It often takes both time and skill to reconstruct the past and to bring to the surface what actually occurred in the months and years that precede the interview, to unearth forgotten events, the significance of which men and women did not realize at the time.

Another important point is the *progress* of the trouble. Has the trouble developed slowly or rapidly? Has the trouble grown steadily from month to month and from year to year, or has it been intermittent and recurrent? These questions also have to be thoughtfully considered with the people who come to us, for they themselves are not always aware of the character and progress of their trouble. "Is this the first time your husband has been interested in another woman?" "Yes, it is. Nothing like this has ever happened before. It is just a sudden infatuation." But this wife did not know all the facts of the case. The full evidence, when it was gathered, proved that the husband had been interested in other women a number of times in the course of his married life and that he had never been altogether faithful. In other words, what seemed to his wife a sudden onset of infidelity really was the latest expression of a slowly developing alienation and unfaithfulness. It is clear that the difference in diagnosis means a difference in treatment. The plan of treatment for a man who has suffered a sudden lapse in conduct is very different from a plan of treatment for a man whose delinquencies are the expression of a gradual deterioration in character.

In another case a wife suspected that her discovery of her husband's interest in another woman was but the latest instance of his infidelities. In this she was altogether correct. For some time her husband had withdrawn himself from her. In fact, in the course of their marriage he had left home on three occasions for a period of a week or two. Each time he returned without any explanation or apology. In other words, the trouble was intermittent in character and recurred several times. It is evident that a trouble that is intermittent and recurrent cannot be treated in the same way that we should treat distress that reveals itself for the first time. Dissension that grows steadily over a period of years is much more difficult to overcome than discord that is intermittent and spasmodic and temporary in character. Many plans of treatment fail altogether because they are based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of the trouble and the character and constitution of the man or woman who is to be treated or the man and the woman who are to be treated, for frequently both the man and the woman suffer from the same or similar defects.

The third important point that we must understand is the *present status* of the case. In what stage is the trouble when it comes to us? Is it in the incipient, the acute, or the chronic stage, or is it now convalescent? The whole plan of treatment will depend upon the answer to this question, and the answer cannot always be discovered in the first interview. A doctor may look into a patient's throat and say, "This infection is just beginning," or "This infection is now acute," or "This is a chronic condition," or "The trouble is now clearing up," and his treatment will be in accordance with what he sees. It takes more time and wider exploration to discover the stage of the trouble in marriage and family life, but until

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we discover the truth, it is difficult to proceed. If the trouble is in the incipient stage, as few cases are when they come to us, much as a rule can be done. If the trouble is in the acute stage, as often happens, it is generally necessary to wait until passions have subsided before we can begin a program of treatment. If the trouble is in the chronic stage, the outlook or prognosis is not good, and the utmost we can do is to mitigate the distress. If the trouble is in the convalescent stage, the best thing perhaps is to do little if anything. With some encouragement the cure will come of its own accord.

But even more important than the stage of the distress is the *nature* of the trouble when it first comes to our attention. Distress may begin in one way and in the course of time may become something very different. It may begin with a misunderstanding concerning the budget, and it may develop into an acute antagonism of two personalities; that is, it may begin as an economic problem and may become in time a psychological problem. Or the trouble may begin as a minor maladjustment on the biological level and develop into a major maladjustment upon the ethical or religious level. One woman stated her case frankly in this way: "It is true that my husband and I have never been harmoniously adjusted in our biological relationships. But our trouble today has gone very far beyond that. Not only is my husband impatient with me because I cannot respond as he wishes; he is seeking the association of other women and is making our life together utterly impossible." It would be of little service to attempt to adjust this man and woman biologically and to fail to recognize that their problem has now become one of reeducation in ethical attitudes and relationships. It is not unlikely that the man and the woman may still think of their trouble in

terms of what it once was instead of seeing it as it now is. Against this misinterpretation on their part we must be careful to guard them and also ourselves.

From whom shall this evidence concerning the origin, the progress, and the present status of the case be gathered? Naturally, the first source of information is the *man and woman in trouble*. Not all the facts will be discovered in the initial interview or even in the second. In truth, it may not be possible in the first and second interviews to secure even enough evidence to establish an accurate outline of the case, an outline that can be expanded and filled in as the conferences proceed. The record of the interviews, we may find, reveals little material of pertinent value. Men and women often talk a great deal but not always to the point. They have a way of more or less consciously avoiding the center of the trouble, the essential facts, that it is necessary for us to know. This very method of presentation, however, is in itself evidence and reveals a disinclination on the part of the man or woman to face the trouble frankly. Other men and women come to us well prepared. They have arranged the facts of the case that they wish to present in excellent order, and they present the evidence without interruption or digression. Sometimes they even write out their statement. This statement it is necessary to study carefully and with caution. Every item it contains may be relevant and material to the case, or it may be just the contrary.

No matter what the content of the interview, however, the wisest procedure in the beginning is to allow the man or woman to talk freely. Men and women and even children nurse both actual and imagined injuries, and these injuries grow larger and more dangerous with the nursing. Just to let these people talk to someone who is sympathetic and understanding and expert is in itself not only



a relaxation of tension; it is a form of therapy. We all have had the experience of feeling relieved and improved after a thorough discussion of our problem with an understanding friend. This is not merely because we engage in a form of confession, that is, unburden ourselves of a sense of guilt. It is because through discussion we release pent-up emotions, suppressed fears, hates, and frustrations, and unexpressed desires, loves, and ambitions. And through this release we succeed in removing our problem from the inside to the outside where we can see it in proper proportion and perspective. The utmost we need to do as counselors in an interview of this character is to direct the discussion with carefully timed questions and suggestions. Questions and suggestions that are not carefully timed only interrupt the interview and irritate the individuals.

In listening to the presentation we must, of course, be intent and alert and quick to make mental notes of the facts as they appear in the course of the interview. Not only the facts themselves we must note, but also the way in which the facts are presented, the tone of the voice, the expression of the face, the movement of the hands and other parts of the body, even the emotions and the impulses that are inwardly at work and that unconsciously find an outlet in the mood and the manner of the man or woman. But throughout the conference we must likewise be on guard and against at least two dangers. One danger is the inevitable disposition of every man and woman to present the case in the best possible light from his or her own point of view and with his or her own interest in mind. Every person who comes to us in the field of marriage and family counseling, as in other fields of work, becomes inevitably his or her own advocate and not only wants to convince us of the rightness of his or her own point of view but, more than this, wants to

persuade us to take the action that he or she thinks advisable. The action urged upon us may be right, but, on the other hand, in spite of this persuasive power the action may be most unwise.

One woman, both in her personal visits and in her written statements, built up a case of maltreatment and persecution that sounded plausible and cogent. She wrote and spoke with such apparent earnestness and sincerity, she marshaled all her material with such unusual intelligence and skill that it was difficult to doubt her statements. But the evidence that was gathered from other sources proved her to be little more than an impostor. On the other hand, one of the most hesitant and confused and unconvincing of men proved to be altogether right in the charges against his wife. He was by nature a timid person, and in addition to this his native sense of chivalry made him reluctant even to accuse his wife and to formulate the case against her. The inability of some men and women to think clearly and to speak convincingly must not deceive us. Even though they stammer and stutter in their presentation of the case, they are doing their utmost to impress us with the rightness of their own position. No matter what their manner of presentation, however, we must not forget that they are engaged in what lawyers call special pleading, and special pleading is never unbiased and impartial.

The second danger against which we must guard ourselves is the constant attempt at disguise and concealment. Men and women may more or less consciously change not only the content but the color and the character of the material and evidence in the case. The underlying facts themselves may be correct, but we have the feeling that there is something unreal about their appearance. Not infrequently we discover that we are looking at faces that are actually in disguise. The disguise may be

interesting and attractive, the make-up box may be skillfully employed, but the result is that the evidence is so misrepresented that the whole picture of the case is distorted. One woman was correct in stating that her husband had ceased to care for her. This was the underlying fact, but her description of her husband's conduct gave an altogether incorrect picture of the man and his attitude. In order to relieve herself of any blame, she had built up in her own mind an utterly unwarranted image of her husband. She refused to face the simple fact that her husband had outgrown his wife and had ceased to love her. This happens more often than men and women will allow themselves to believe.

Then there are other men and women who deliberately omit or conceal material that is an important part of the case. "Why does your wife want to divorce you?" I asked one man. "She found a letter in my pocket when she sent my suit to the cleaner." "Was this your only indiscretion?" "It was. I swear it was the first and the last. I cannot explain to myself how it ever happened." The investigation proved, however, that this indiscretion was neither the first nor the last. One woman accused her husband of a number of extra-matrimonial alliances contracted at different times. The assembling of the available evidence proved that she was correct in her accusation. But in the course of one of the conferences with the husband he suddenly and most unexpectedly asked, "Has my wife told you anything about her own escapades?" "Nothing whatever." "Well, it would be interesting to inquire." Further investigation exposed evidence that the woman had carefully concealed, facts concerning her own misconduct. This evidence did not exonerate the husband, but it did condemn the wife. She had begun her "affairs" early in her married life and not as a result of what she discovered concerning her husband.

We know that in every case of marriage and family counseling there are at least two people to be consulted. the two that compose the couple. Sometimes there are three, the so-called triangle case; and now and then there are four, the case in which a married man is involved with a married woman who is not his wife, the so-called quadrangle. This means that statements must be secured from both the man and the woman. But sometimes this is difficult, and occasionally it is impossible. In some cases the woman absolutely refuses to allow us to communicate with her husband, and in other cases the husband will not permit us to consult his wife. The woman is distressed over her husband's conduct; he denies her what she needs; he mistreats and abuses her; she believes that he drinks or gambles and associates with evil companions. But the woman does not want us to see her husband. She is afraid of what he will do. "If you try to communicate with my husband, he will only make me suffer the more for it." "If you complain to my husband, he will leave me altogether." "There is no use in discussing this with my husband at all. No one can do a thing with him." The woman may be right. Some men are so mean and so brutal and some women are so intimidated and so terrified that any inquiry or complaint is followed by more and greater distress. The man resents what he calls interference with his domestic affairs and takes this interference as an excuse for further maltreatment of his wife.

In such cases as these—and they occur not infrequently—what course of action should we adopt? There is in truth little that we can do. In fact, we are unable to do anything to complete the evidence, that is, to secure the husband's statement of the case. But there may be something that we can do to assist the woman. We may not be able to assist her to solve the problem of her marital

life. We may, however, be able to do other things that are of real service. It is some comfort to the woman just to feel that she can discuss her problems with us and that there is someone to whom she can go when others fail and when life grows very difficult. It may also be possible for us to aid her to build up new courage to face life, to acquire new strength to bear the burden that life has imposed upon her, to adjust herself to a condition over which she and we have no control. This often means more than we realize. To feel that we are alone, that no one cares, that we must suffer in silence is a terrible experience, especially when the experience strikes at the very heart of life itself. To feel that we have not the pity but the sympathy of someone, that we have the support and counsel of a friend often sustains us through the crises in life.

The question must also be considered: Is it fair to give a man counsel without seeing his wife, or to give a wife counsel without seeing her husband? The man may rightly criticize us for advising his wife without seeing him. And the wife may directly condemn us for advising her husband without listening to her story. One man complained bitterly that his wife could not control her temper, that she had lost the respect even of her children, that she neglected the household, and constantly mis-spent the allowance given her. He was advised to pursue a certain course of action. When his wife learned, however, that he had sought counsel and had been advised, she came herself. She admitted the correctness of much of the husband's complaint. "But," she argued, "what right have you to advise my husband without first speaking to me? I am also a party to this marriage contract." Then she told her own story in her own way. "I am all my husband says I am. But what has my husband done during the years of our marriage to help me outgrow my

faults? I was never properly educated, nor was I properly trained to manage a home. I came out of a wretched family with no love and no discipline. My husband knew that when he married me. He blames me now for what I am. I blame him for not helping me to become something better." It was perfectly clear that the counselor had unintentionally been unfair to the woman. The husband was right in the facts but wrong in his whole attitude toward his wife.

How far beyond the immediate couple should we go in assembling evidence? Have we a right to consult *other relatives*? This is one of the delicate questions we face in marriage and family counseling. A lawyer is free to summon anyone he believes possesses evidence that is pertinent to the case; he may even compel the witness to testify under oath. Physicians and psychiatrists also may with propriety send for and interview other members of the family. There is no doubt that some other relatives do possess material that would often be of service to us in a fuller and more adequate understanding of the case, brothers, sisters, children, relatives-in-law. Are we free to invite them to share their knowledge with us, and what value shall we place upon the statement that they make? As a rule, the men and women who come to us will not allow us to consult other relatives. They insist that their problem is a "private affair" and that other relatives must not be involved or introduced into the case. This attitude on their part seems reasonable. Except in rare cases and under extraordinary circumstances we may consult other relatives only when we have the consent and cooperation of the couple seeking our counsel.

It is true undoubtedly that we must exercise care and caution in studying the statements of other relatives. The immediate relatives may be biased, and the relatives-

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in-law may be prejudiced. But this is not always the case. On the contrary, sometimes it is just the reverse. A woman may be of a jealous disposition and deeply prejudiced against her own sister. A man may have suffered an injustice at the hands of his brother and may as a result be prejudiced against him. A son even though grown may be so attached to his mother by the "silver cord" that he is unable to recognize the good in his own father. On the other hand, some relative-in-law may be the friend and confidant of the husband or the wife. Such relatives may also be so objective in their attitude that they can give us the intimate evidence we need with complete impartiality. In fact, some of the most reliable material in certain cases has come from the father-in-law and the mother-in-law in spite of their affection for their own son or daughter. They are able to see the case with clear vision and to weigh the evidence with fairness and justice. In other words, the evidence presented by relatives and relatives-in-law must be considered without any prejudice on our part.

In listening to the statements of relatives both near and far we must remember that they may be unaware of all the facts. They may think they know, and still they may be altogether mistaken. Couples do not always confide in their relatives; parents do not always confide in their children; and children do not always confide in their parents. Brothers and sisters may to our surprise know very little about each other and about each other's work and associations. This is true even when they live in the same house, and it certainly is true when they live in different homes and in different communities. This they do not realize themselves until they are interviewed. "I really know very little about my brother's work and the people with whom he goes out. To be perfectly honest I know very little about his home life and the relationship

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between him and his wife. Whenever we visit his home, we see only the surface of their life, not the inside." "I wish I could tell you more about my sister and her husband. But we live in different cities and only write to each other. Now and then we visit, but I know nothing about the circles in which they move and the way in which they conduct themselves." The nearest of relatives are often just as surprised as we are to learn the truth when the truth is uncovered.

Not only may relatives be unaware of all the facts of the case; they may also misunderstand and misinterpret the little they do know. For example, they may think that their brother or sister is just somewhat excitable or a little discouraged when the person actually may be gravely ill with a mental disturbance. Few of us are objective enough or well trained enough to recognize our own symptoms. How much less can we recognize the symptoms in others and especially those that we see from day to day! Some members of the family will say, "What you tell us is incredible. We simply cannot believe it." Or they will insist, "You are altogether wrong. There is nothing the matter with our brother; certainly there is nothing abnormal about him." Even skilled diagnosticians may make mistakes now and then. How much more is this likely with the unskilled and the unobservant! Mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, and other relatives, because they are untrained to observe and unskilled in discovering the cause of trouble, very frequently completely misinterpret the actions and attitudes of the couple consulting us. They know little of the complexities of personality and less of the interaction of the biological and psychological forces. What seem to them symptoms of a minor misunderstanding may prove to be symptoms of deep and grievous psychological maladjustments.



Another point to keep in mind is that relatives often try to suppress not only the evidence that we need but the whole case. They tell us that they do not want to be blamed for disclosing the facts. What they really do not want is a scandal in the family. They are inclined to do exactly what men and women did a generation ago with tuberculosis cases and what families still do with mental hygiene cases. They endeavor to hide them from the public. Very often in the course of our conferences we discover that either the man or the woman or both have discussed their problem with relatives and that the relatives have discouraged them from consulting anyone outside the family. "This is a family matter, and you must not speak of it outside the family circle. You will only bring embarrassment and disgrace to all of us." They do not seem to realize that they are making it impossible for us to study the trouble and to relieve the distress. Of course, it is unpleasant to have these difficulties and distresses develop in our family circle. In extreme cases it may even bring dishonor and disgrace upon the members of the family. But the only hope of a solution and a cure lies in a frank and courageous facing of the facts.

To take an extreme case: "How can we face the fact that our daughter is pregnant and unmarried? We must conceal this condition from everyone." This state of mind is understandable; it is a disgrace, but the parents cannot and must not think only of themselves and of what people will say. It is not necessary to disclose the daughter's condition to many others, but we must realize and so must the relatives that the young woman may be able to go through this crisis with more courage and less psychological damage if she has the support of a few sympathetic and forbearing friends. The problem must be seen as a whole and not in fragments, and the

girl herself and the outcome as far as she is concerned are not fragments but a large part of the problem. Another illustration is the case of impending divorce. "We know that there is nothing for our daughter to do but to separate from her husband. There has never been a divorce in our family, and we are all dreadfully ashamed of what is about to happen. We do not want anything said or done until the decree has been granted." The parents in this case did not appreciate the fact that their daughter was passing through a severe crisis and that the all-important thing was to try to assist her to adjust herself to the tragic disillusionment in her married life. This adjustment is as much a part of the solution of the case as the divorce itself.

Have we the right to go beyond the relatives, to consult *friends, employers, teachers, neighbors, tradesmen*, as is often done in social work and in other fields of service? Any one of these persons may possess evidence that will be of assistance to us in understanding and diagnosing the case. For instance, a child may be very different in school from what it is at home and for a good reason. A man may be very different in his office or factory from what he is in the midst of his family. A woman may be very different with her intimate friends from what she is with her husband and her children. Teachers are often surprised to learn that a child who is well behaved and cooperative in school is at home antagonistic and difficult to direct and control. An employer is often reluctant to believe that a man who is steady and efficient in his work in the factory is sullen at home and utterly disinterested in his wife and neglectful of his children. Friends are loath to believe that the woman who is so genial in their company is hypercritical of her husband and a source of discord in her home. But while it is important to know all the facts and to discover the reasons for

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conduct, we have no right, we must admit, to consult others without the consent of the man or woman or couple that comes to us.

When we do secure this consent and consult others, it is important to keep in mind that the teacher, the employer, the friend, or the neighbor also sees only one part of the person, one aspect of the case and not the whole. We all have more than one side or facet to our personalities, and sometimes it is almost unbelievable that the different sides or elements can belong to the same person. Whether we wish to acknowledge it or not, the truth is that there is a little of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in most of us. This is why it is necessary for us to be alert in every interview and to compare the personality of the man or woman as it reveals itself in the last interview with the way in which it manifested itself in previous meetings. We are often compelled to recognize the fact that the person seems to have changed in the course of a few days or weeks. The truth is that the person has not changed. He or she has merely made us acquainted with other aspects of his or her personality. These different aspects may even contradict each other; one aspect may be utterly inconsistent with another. But this is what we must expect in complex and unorganized personalities. A completely integrated and consistent personality is one of the rare phenomena in human nature.

The volume of evidence, it must be emphasized, is no indication of its value. Three or four people may cite the same or similar facts, may tell the same story with only slight variations, and still it may be wrong. One worker reported that a man under her care had a bad case of bronchitis. "How do you know?" "He told me himself and his wife told me the same thing." "Did you hear this from anyone else?" "Yes, the janitor in the building said the man had bronchitis, and so did the

neighbors and tradesmen with whom I spoke." "Well," said the supervisor, "let us now have the man examined by a physician." The examination showed that the man was in an advanced stage of tuberculosis. In another case the wife stated that the cause of disagreement between her husband and herself was the care and education of the children. Her husband said, "Yes, this is true, we cannot agree upon the way in which our children should be educated." The relatives of both the wife and the husband were of the same opinion. They all insisted that the cause of disagreement and dissension was the inability of the husband and wife to agree upon the way in which the children were to be educated and trained. But a careful study of both the husband and wife disclosed the fact that the man had come from one social group and had one outlook upon life, whereas the woman had come from another social group and had an entirely different outlook on life. In other words, the real cause of the trouble was not indicated by the number of statements secured, all of which were of a similar character, but by the study of a counselor who uncovered the fundamental cause of conflict.

The only evidence that counts is the evidence of a person who is competent to speak. If it is medical evidence that we desire, the evidence must come from a physician. If it is psychiatric evidence that we require, the evidence must come from a psychiatrist. If the evidence that is needed is legal, it must come from a lawyer who is expert in the Domestic Relations Law. If the evidence we seek concerns the behavior and manner of the person, it must come from one who is able to observe without prejudice and to speak without partiality. If the evidence concerns the man's or woman's efficiency and skill as a worker, the evidence must come from an employer who is competent to testify. Even

experts, however, sometimes differ not only in regard to the facts themselves but in their interpretation of the facts. Some years ago a man was seriously ill. Three nationally known diagnosticians differed in their diagnoses. A fourth man, a distinguished surgeon, was frank enough to say, "I don't know what you have, but I know what you have not." He named three conditions. When the surgeon decided to operate, however, he discovered that the patient was suffering with one of the conditions that he said the man did not have. No expert, however great, is altogether infallible.

Men and women, we also discover, are inclined to consult more than one individual or agency. Sometimes they do this merely because they want another opinion. To this opinion they are undoubtedly entitled, and we must not question their right to consult someone else. Sometimes they just want to be reassured. This is often necessary. Some men and women are so constituted that they are unable to feel complete confidence in any one person, and they are not satisfied until the opinion of one person is confirmed by the opinion of others. The only thing to do is to allow them to satisfy themselves through consulting others. Sometimes men and women want to try out another plan just as an experiment. This is their privilege, and we have no right to deny or even question it. "We have tried your plan for three months; we have tried to adjust ourselves to each other in accordance with your recommendations and under your guidance. It is possible that your plan would succeed in time; but we feel we would now like to try another plan that someone else may recommend." And sometimes men and women are just a little weary of going to the same person for counsel. In many cases the change may prove helpful. In other cases we may find it necessary to discourage the tendency to consult too many experts.

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This inclination and occasionally this habit call for courtesy and for caution and for consultation on our part. It is not only courteous to confer with others who are interested and active in the case; it is prudent and wise social practice. In many communities social agencies have established what is known as the Social Service Exchange. This Exchange endeavors to keep a record of all individuals and agencies interested in every case listed with the Exchange. The first step is to inquire of the Exchange and to learn whether the case is listed and what individuals and agencies are interested. The second step is to confer with these individuals and agencies and to review the material they have assembled, the action they have taken, and the conclusions they have reached. The third step is to agree with them as to who is to assume charge of the case from now on and also to agree upon what now seems to be the wisest course of action. This procedure not only saves time; it saves us from doing over again what others have already done. It is embarrassing to have a man or woman say to us, "Why repeat the plan that I have already tried and that has failed?"

In marriage and family counseling there is no central office that we can consult. The men and women come to us from different social groups, from different economic levels, even from different communities. It is necessary, therefore, to inquire of the men and women themselves and to confer with those they have consulted and who have served them. We are under no obligation to accept what others say as complete and final. The evidence they possess may itself be inadequate; the plans they have tried may have been unwise; the conclusions they have reached may be altogether incorrect. We ourselves at this stage may need additional material; we may decide to try another plan, or we may decide to try the same



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plan in the hands of another person; we may even come to an entirely different conclusion or prognosis. But as a matter of professional ethics and also as a matter of good social practice we must arrange to confer with physicians, psychiatrists, lawyers, social workers, and others who have been active in the treatment of the case. This will save us from making many unnecessary mistakes, and it will also win for us the respect and confidence of community organizations as well as of individuals.

In all this program of work, in assembling evidence, in conversations with relatives and friends, in conferences with experts and agencies, we must be careful to observe the rule of confidence. Confidence in marriage and family counseling is as sacred as the confession. As counselors it is our duty to gather what material we can but not to share secrets. There are many people among the laymen who are all too eager to peep into the secret life of others, and there are altogether too many men and women who cannot resist the temptation of gossiping about the things they learn. This morbid interest in the troubles of others we must discourage and even condemn. Nothing can be worse than to expose and to exploit human misery. In our inquiries we must likewise be careful not to awaken unwarranted suspicion. One man complained bitterly, "You have made it very difficult for me by speaking to my employer. You seemed to imply that I was guilty of some serious offense." The rule of the law that a man is innocent until he is proved to be guilty may not be correct. A man may be guilty even if we cannot prove it. But we must in our work avoid doing or saying or suggesting anything that will by implication condemn a man or woman in advance. The impression that we may unintentionally and even unconsciously create we may never be able to correct.



## CHAPTER 11

### THE CAUSE OF DISTRESS

After we have assembled the evidence and arranged in order all the material that is available, we are prepared to determine the cause or causes of distress, in other words, to make a diagnosis. This is much more difficult than it was one or two generations ago. Our social philosophy today and our theory of the source of suffering are very different from those of our fathers and grandfathers. Fifty years ago men and women unhesitatingly ascribed all distress to the misconduct of individuals and looked upon distress as a form of punishment. If a man suffers, it must be due to some sin that he has committed. Suffering, according to this theory, is the result of sin. If a family is in a state of destitution, it is because the family is indolent and improvident. If a man is out of work, it is because he is lazy or addicted to some evil habit such as alcoholism or gambling. If a woman is mentally ill and housed in an asylum, it is because she has been guilty of some form of misconduct. If a child is in distress, it must be because of some sin the child has committed even though we are unable to discover the sin and the punishment seems out of all proportion to any sin a child could possibly have committed.

This is known as the theological explanation of distress and is clearly expressed in the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. Adam and Eve disobey the command of God; therefore they are expelled from the Garden of Eden and must suffer pain as punishment. "And unto Adam He said: 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the

voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'” This also is the explanation of suffering that the friends of Job offer for the disasters that befall him. Job, however, does not agree with them. He knows that he is innocent of evil-doing. He questions the ancient doctrine even though he is unable to explain or to account for his own suffering. Sin is a cause of suffering; but not all suffering is due to sin. This seems to be the conclusion of the argument in this great biblical tragedy whose central theme is the universal and eternal problem of sin and suffering.

At the beginning of the twentieth century another theory of distress emerged in social life and took definite form. Distress, according to this theory, is not due to the sin of the individual but to the sins of society. This is known as the theory of social maladjustment and was fully formulated by Dr. Edward T. Devine in his address as president of the National Conference of Charities and Correction in 1906 in the city of Philadelphia. Later Dr. Devine developed this theory in his book entitled “Misery and Its Causes,” published in 1909. In this book he attempts to show to what degree distress is due to social conditions, to what degree poverty, ill health, unemployment, and other forms of misery are due not to the misconduct and sins of men and women but to the type of social organization we have created, to social conditions that are in themselves evil and that constitute the sins of society. “In contrast with the idea that misery

is moral, the inexorable visitation of punishment for immoral actions and the inevitable outcome of depraved character, I wish to present the idea that it is economic, the result of maladjustment, that defective personality is only a halfway explanation, which itself results directly from conditions which society may largely control."

For a generation this theory of distress has dominated social thinking and has determined programs of social treatment and has both inspired and shaped social legislation. Families are destitute not because they are improvident and incompetent but because their income is low and insufficient. Therefore, it is necessary to pass laws that will insure every man and woman at least a minimum wage, laws that will more equitably distribute the national annual income that today is sufficient to maintain every family upon a decent level of life. Men are out of work not because they are indolent or the victims of evil habits but because our economic system is wrongly organized. Therefore, we must pass laws that will change the system and that will assure to every man able and willing to work uninterrupted and reasonable employment. If men and women develop typhoid fever, it is not because of any form of personal misconduct but because communities have failed to build filtration plants and to purify their water supply. If children die of diphtheria, it is not because they are tainted with sin but because departments of health have not immunized children. It is therefore necessary to pass laws that will prevent disease and protect the community. .

Within the last few years another and significant change has occurred. As a result of the growth of psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis and the new emphasis upon the mental hygiene movement as a whole the center of interest has shifted from society back to the

individual. The outcome is a new theory of distress and suffering. Suffering and distress, according to this theory, are not due to the sins of the individual or to the sins of society. They are due to weaknesses and defects, impairments and disturbances in the psychical or psychophysical constitution of men and women. In fact, sin and guilt during these latter years have completely disappeared from the vocabulary of social work and social programs. This marks an exceedingly interesting stage in the series of changes that have taken place in the evolution of the theory of distress. First came the theory of the sin of the individual, man, woman, or child, and the need of repentance and atonement; then came social maladjustment and the need of ending social evils through social legislation. Now comes the psychical or psychophysical defect that needs to be corrected through the methods of psychiatry and psychoanalysis. How much truth is there in each one of these theories?

The first theory undoubtedly contained some truth. Some men and women are in trouble because they have sinned; but others have not sinned and are in distress. This theory therefore is not complete and cannot be altogether correct. The second theory also contained much truth. Many people are in trouble because of evils in society—economic, political, and cultural; but not all distress can be charged to social maladjustment. This theory, therefore, omits a number of factors and is consequently limited. How far is the third theory adequate? How much distress in men, women, and children and in marriage and family relationships is due to defects and disturbances in the psychophysical area of life? There is no doubt that this theory does explain many difficulties and reveals the cause of much suffering. A further and more careful study of distress of men and women in trouble seems to warrant this conclusion:

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Some distress is due to conditions within the circle of the individual; some distress is due to conditions within the larger circle of the family; some distress is due to conditions within the home; some distress to conditions in the neighborhood; some distress to conditions in the occupational life of men and women; and some distress to the conditions in the larger circle of our economic, political, and cultural life. These circles we must now proceed to explore.

### THE INDIVIDUAL

In exploring the circle of the individual we must not make the mistake of thinking of the individual as divided into two parts, that is, the physical and the psychical, or still worse, the physical and the mental. This mistake, often made in current thought and programs of service and serious in its consequences, is also of theological origin. It derives directly from the ancient doctrine of dichotomy, the doctrine that divides man into two parts, the flesh and the spirit. These two parts, these two selves, are in constant conflict with each other in accordance with the teachings of this theology. The flesh is corrupt and evil and must be subdued in order that the spirit may survive and be saved. It is true that we have the physical constitution at one end of the scale and the spiritual at the other. "Man is physical in origin, but spiritual in his aspirations," to quote the teaching of Santayana. But there is no line at which the division actually takes place, no point at which we can say, "Here the physical ends and the spiritual begins." Thus there can be no two separate and distinct selves or segments into which the individual can be separated; and the old doctrine of conflict between the flesh and the spirit must be restated in other terms.

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The individual, we now recognize, must be viewed and treated as a unit. Man contains within himself all the elements or aspects that range from the physical to the spiritual; they are all included within the same circle. Not only this, but there is a constant interplay between the elements of which man is composed. So simple a thing as a momentary draining of the blood from the brain will result in complete loss of consciousness. So simple a thing as the introduction of a drug into the blood stream will result in fantasies and hallucinations. So simple a thing as a transitory state of fear may result in a complete disturbance of the intestinal tract. So simple a thing as a passing thought or a fleeting memory may result in complete rigidity of the whole muscular structure. "Interplay" is in truth not the correct word to employ in describing the relation to each other of the elements that compose the individual. The correct word is "inter-causality," for the action of one element is a direct cause of action in another. It is therefore evident that we must think of the individual as a unit, as an integrated personality, even though the different elements of which man is composed differ so greatly from each other in both structure and function.

When we study human beings, we find that they are composed of bone and muscle and organs and glands; that they are moved by instincts, impulses, and emotions; that they are endowed with intellect and will power and with ethical and religious faculties; that they are deeply influenced by dreams, imagination, ideals; that they have both conscious and subconscious levels of experience. The distress of which they speak and about which they consult us may arise out of any one or more of these areas or segments of the circle of the individual. In any one or more areas there may be underdevelopment or overdevelopment; in any one or more

there may be a temporary disturbance, a state of disorganization; in any one of these areas there may be disease or deformity, a deviation from what we have come to describe as the normal, the healthy, the wholesome. The condition that exists in any one area may and usually does affect other areas, even those that seem far removed and unrelated. There are, however, no sealed compartments in the make-up of the human being. It is therefore necessary to consider the individual as a whole even when we are studying only one of the many sides or parts or segments that together compose the man or woman or child in whom we are interested, for it is the whole person and not a fragment thereof with whom we are concerned and who looks to us for guidance and treatment and cure.

Every experienced student of human nature is able to cite cases to illustrate this point of view. One young man complained that pains in the hip joints made it difficult for him to walk properly and that he constantly felt uncomfortable and embarrassed in walking with other people. His whole behavior was affected by what he felt. An examination by a specialist disclosed the fact that there was a malformation of the vertebrae in the sacroiliac region that needed to be corrected through an operation. One husband constantly scolded and humiliated his wife because she did not stand straight and make a better appearance in the presence of others. The cause of the trouble was not, as her husband believed, a weakness of spirit but a weakness of the muscles of the back. This condition was easily corrected through proper exercises. Another man charged his wife with indifference and coldness. An examination revealed the fact that she suffered with a glandular condition that altogether accounted for her emotional state. We are now beginning to understand the part that the glands and their secre-

tions play in influencing not only the appearance of a person but the behavior as well. One woman complained that her husband was always irascible and frequently was very caustic in his comments. An internist discovered that the man suffered with ulcers of the stomach and gastric disturbances and that these accounted for his conduct.

Some men and women suffer distress because of a weakness or atrophy of the nerves in one of the organs of sense. One man complained of friction in his family, and the family complained that the man was impatient and irritable, especially at the table. An examination soon revealed the fact that the real source of trouble was an impairment of hearing, which made it difficult for him to understand much that the members of the family were saying. A device invented for the hard of hearing completely changed the atmosphere in this family. Some men and women are in distress because of a disturbance in their emotional life. One woman admitted that she was unable to concentrate her attention upon her household and that she could not bear with her children even though she knew that they were just normal little boys and girls and guilty of nothing more than childish exhibitions of temper. A careful study of the woman confirmed the fact that she suffered from emotional instability and had always been more or less unstable in her emotional life. In this case little could be done to correct a constitutional defect. The members of a whole family accused the husband and father of failure to support them. The accusation was correct, but it required an examination of the man to convince the family that the man, instead of being indifferent or indolent, was mentally limited and simply unable to earn enough to maintain his family. In other words, his working capacity was conditioned by his low mentality.



Some men and women are in distress because they lack a sense of responsibility, ethical standards, and the will power to resist temptation. It is not uncommon to have women complain that the husband and father is gambling and wasting on others the money that he earns and should spend on his family. Delinquents develop largely because of these weaknesses and defects in the area of the moral life. Sometimes the conditions that cause deviations in conduct lie deeply hidden and are very obscure. One surgeon remarked, "We never could understand that man's behavior until we operated and explored the abdominal cavity." A psychiatrist made this comment: "It was utterly impossible to explain that man's conduct and attitudes until we uncovered and brought to the surface the experiences of his earliest years, experiences that he had completely forgotten and of which he had never been clearly aware." These illustrations indicate that distress may be due to conditions in different parts of which the individual is composed and emphasize the necessity of studying the individual as a whole. This study in order to be complete may require an examination at the hands of more than one expert; it may require examinations by a staff of men, each one competent in his own field.

### THE FAMILY

Outside the circle of the individual lies the circle of the family. In this circle, the next to be explored, a number of conditions may exist that may serve as a source of distress. Something may be wrong with the structure of the family. The family, for example, may be incomplete. The father or mother or both may be absent, temporarily, intermittently, or permanently. This means lack of proper care and supervision for the children, and this in turn may lead to misbehavior or even delinquency.

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One woman said quite frankly, "I do everything I possibly can for my two young sons who are now ten and twelve. But I know that they need a father as well as a mother. Yet how can I meet this need when the father deserts us and refuses to return home?" The incompleteness of the family means more than reduced income or lack of supervision; it means that the normal psychological needs are not met in those who remain, that is, in the wife, the husband, or the children. This is an important matter, for it may and usually does mean that the natural desires and longings of the individual remain unsatisfied, and it may also mean a shaken and ever-present sense of insecurity. It is a well-established fact that children who come out of broken homes have less chance of a happy married life than those who come out of complete and normal homes.

In some families it is not the parents but the children who are absent. On the one hand, there is the childless couple that feels the home is incomplete without a child; on the other hand, there is the couple, in middle life or old age, whose children have married or disappeared or died. Here also is a real cause of distress. The large number of applications on file in every agency that places children for adoption is proof of the need that couples feel for children. "Our life has been completely transformed through the adoption of this little baby." The emptiness in the life of old people is evident not only in their home but in their eyes and in their hearts. In other families, however, the source of distress is not the absence of children but the presence of too many. The trouble in some cases is, of course, that the father is unable to maintain a family so large. His earning power has not increased with the increase in the number of children. But in other cases the trouble is not economic. Mothers and fathers may be limited in their ability to

manage as well as to maintain more than two or three children. This condition is not always recognized but is a real source of distress within the family.

Something may likewise be wrong with the organization of the family. In some families the mother may still act as the matriarch and may dominate not only the home but the husband and the children, even the children who are grown and married. This makes it very difficult for every member of the family, since this matriarchal attitude is nothing less than a determination on the part of the mother to rule her family and to rule without question. In some social groups the matriarchal form of family organization is traditional, but it is utterly inconsistent with the new type of family organization that is developing today. The inevitable result is discord and dissension within the home. In some families the mother's desire to dominate is rooted entirely in selfishness and a sense of possessiveness. Children frequently complain, "Our mother acts as if we were not her children but her possessions. We have no control over our own life; in fact we are not expected to have any desires or ambitions of our own." In these families the personalities of the husband and children are completely suppressed and thwarted. The only solution is escape and emancipation. Escape and emancipation, however, are not always possible, and men and women are often compelled to adjust themselves to a compromise.

In other families it is the father who assumes to control the life of his wife and to direct the conduct of his children. In many social groups the patriarchal form of family organization still persists. But in these days the children are more than inclined to revolt against the authority of the father, and the wife is disposed to resent the lordship of her husband. Both the wife and the children feel that they should be free to develop their

own powers and their own personalities. This conflict between the petty dictatorship of the father or mother and the demand for a democratic form of organization of family life is a frequent cause of distress and manifests itself in manifold ways, from the simplest form of disobedience to open and violent rebellion. Perhaps there is no condition in family life today that is a greater source of discord and unhappiness. "Our father refuses to recognize the fact that we are living in a new country and that the new generation has rights and privileges of its own. The ways of the older generation are not the ways of the children." "My husband simply refuses to realize that women today are enfranchised and that the wife must occupy a status equal to that of her husband. We must be free to develop our own capacities and powers."

Another condition that may be at fault is the family's conception of the function of the family today. Some men and women think that the chief function of the family is procreation. This is one of the functions of the family, to reproduce itself and to maintain and perpetuate the human race. But this function has its limitations, and unless these limitations are wisely observed, there will be increasing distress. The social scientists have not agreed upon what is called the optimum population, but they are agreed that the number of children in each family must depend upon three things: One, the health of the parents and especially of the mother. Too many children may undermine the health of the mother and lead to invalidism or premature death. Two, the ability of the family, economic and social, to rear the children as children need to be reared in our complicated social organization. In order to survive and to grow into competent citizens children need care and guidance of the highest type. Three, the social need of the time. There is

no social wisdom in bringing 150 babies into the world when there are only 100 prospective positions to fill; nor is there any social wisdom in increasing the population of a country that is already overpopulated.

Other families think that the chief function of the family is economic. The members think of themselves as a closed corporation and feel not only that every member of the family must contribute his quota toward the support of all but that all members must conserve the property accumulated by the family. It is the function of the family to maintain itself in self-reliance, but it certainly is not its function to enrich itself materially at the expense of other families and to the detriment of its own higher development. This point many men and women are now coming to understand and especially the men and women of the growing generation. They refuse to employ their own training and experience and ability in the acquisition of material wealth. They believe that whatever talents and gifts they possess should be expended in improving and advancing human welfare. In other words, the possessive instinct has died out in the breast of these younger men and women and a sense of social responsibility has grown into maturity. The difference between these two conceptions often results in conflict. "My parents cannot understand when I tell them that I am not interested in acquiring property; that my sole interest is in adding something to scientific knowledge and scientific achievement."

A fourth condition in which there may be weakness is the very foundation on which the family rests. One, the legal contract itself may be defective. This defect may run all the way from a simple fraud to the crime of bigamy. Few men and women seem to understand that marriage itself is a contract that is authorized and sanctioned by the State and that this contract not only

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assumes certain conditions in order to be valid but that it imposes upon the parties to the contract both rights and responsibilities. The conditions that make the marriage contract valid are clearly stipulated in the Domestic Relations Law. But these conditions are occasionally disregarded, sometimes through ignorance and sometimes wilfully. "My wife did not tell me before we married that she had undergone an operation that would make it impossible for her to bear a child. Is this a ground for annulment of our marriage?" "My husband told me that he was divorced, but I did not know that the divorce had been granted in Mexico and is worthless in the United States." Two, the economic foundation of the family may be insufficient. The family as a whole may not be able to earn enough to meet the elementary needs of family life. This is especially true before the children reach the wage-earning age and frequently leads to dissension and distress. "How is it possible for us to live happily together when we are constantly struggling to find enough to pay the rent and to buy food? I have not bought a new dress for two years and my husband has not bought a suit for over three years. We both need clothes in order to make any kind of appearance."

Three, the biological foundation may be defective. In many families there is a taint that breaks out in different ways in different individuals. Tuberculosis is not inherited, but it is communicated to different members of the same family. Some forms of mental disease are transmitted from parent to child and now and then to more than one of the children. An unhealthy family results in much trouble. This we now recognize. Four, the psychological foundation may be inadequate. There may be between husband and wife and parents and children incompatibility of temperament, no community of

interest, no oneness of mind. A radical difference in temperament is more often a cause of discord and disruption in the home than is generally recognized, and it is also true that if two people are of the same excitable temperament, clashes and conflicts are almost inevitable. Unless the husband and wife and the parents and children have interests in common that they can cultivate and share with each other, they are unable to develop the comradeship that is to so large a degree the basis of family life in these times. Without common interests men and women drift away from each other and seek other associations and alliances. The bonds that bind the family together are loosened, and disintegration of the family circle is the only possible outcome and conclusion.

Five, it is more than possible that the ethical foundation of the family is weak and deficient. Husband and wife and parents and children may not confide in each other; they may even conceal from each other things that are important and that all should know. They may not even trust each other, and they may not be fair or just in their dealings with each other. In truth, here are found many of the causes of distress in family life. "My husband tells me nothing of his own work and his own life outside the home. We do not speak to each other frankly, as we should. I always feel as if we were concealing things and building up barriers." All these foundations—the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical—must be carefully studied as well as the function, the organization, and the structure of family life. Like all foundations they lie at the very basis of the family, and like all foundations they are often concealed and their weaknesses and defects remain undiscovered until the whole structure begins to crack and crumble.

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### THE HOME

Outside the circle of the family lies the circle of the home, the place in which the family lives. In this circle there may be many conditions that serve as a cause of trouble. Some homes are not well located in the house itself, when we consider the condition of the man or woman or family. If a woman has rheumatism, it is not possible to do much to assist her as long as she lives in a dark, damp basement; and still there are many men and women being treated in dispensaries today whose home conditions make recovery impossible. In one cardiac clinic the doctors could not understand why a young boy did not respond to the treatment and regime they prescribed; that is, they could not understand this until a social worker visited the home and learned that the boy lived on the top floor of a walk-up house. If a young woman is discouraged and depressed, her condition is undoubtedly intensified when she lives in a small bedroom on the third floor back of a rooming house. The outlook from such a room is not calculated to relieve her despondency or to lighten her heart. And still thousands of young women live in hall bedrooms and live alone. It is not surprising that they do not like it.

Some homes are unsanitary and unclean and without fresh air and sunlight. The sun not only gives light and warmth; it has a healing power as well. And yet there are many homes into which the sun never shines, not only the homes of the poor but even some homes of the well-to-do. Every room in the home of one wealthy family was so heavily draped that the atmosphere was always close and musty. A summer home of another family on the shore of a mountain lake was so shrouded by trees that it was always dark and chilly. Fresh air is necessary to provide us with new supplies of oxygen, but the air



in some homes is never renewed through proper ventilation. Men may complain that their homes are never clean, but they do not always realize how difficult it is to keep some homes in proper condition. "If my husband were to spend a few days in our home, he would understand how impossible it is for me to make the home look clean and fresh." "Every room in our home runs into another, and it is simply impossible for me to keep things where they ought to be. The children do not understand when I tell them our home must be neat and tidy." "How can I keep our home clean when the very walls are so dirty and decayed?" These comments speak for themselves.

Other homes are overcrowded; that is, there is not sufficient space for the number of people who live in the home. This is true, of course, of all those who live in the congested districts and tenement slums where large families, sometimes more than one family, are herded into small quarters. This overcrowding is, we know, a danger to health. The incidence of disease is highest in overcrowded and congested sections of every community. But overcrowding and congestion are also a menace to the moral life of the members. This fact is not always fully understood. In such a home there is no room for privacy, and children see and hear things that seriously affect their emotional life and their morals. "How could our children have any respect for their father when they witness every quarrel we have and hear the language that he uses?" "It is not surprising," one young woman said, "that I have so little faith in marriage. I lived in a home in which marriage became a desecration in my eyes because of the conduct of my parents." This condition is made even more serious when the family is compelled to take in roomers and boarders. Only those who are accustomed to work with families in the lower income

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groups realize the degree to which the presence of roomers and boarders may complicate family life and be a source of irritation and sometimes serious dissension.

When too many people occupy the same home or the same room, they almost inevitably become an irritation to each other. They have no place in which to be alone even for a short time, and solitude is not only desirable but necessary for some people. One woman stated frankly in the presence of her husband, "We both work all day long, and we come to our one room worn out and overwrought. It is not surprising that we quarrel. We have no time to recover from the day's irritations and feel in no condition to meet each other when the day is done." One couple stated that they had not spoken to each other for a long time. "That must be very difficult, living in the same house." "We not only live in the same house; we occupy the same room." In view of the attitude of this man and this woman toward each other, living in the same room was not only difficult; it was indecent and degrading. The least they could do was to arrange to live in separate rooms even though this meant taking an additional room in the apartment hotel. This they agreed to do without delay. In these days when so many couples and small families are living in one- and two-room apartments, this problem of overcrowding becomes general and acute. The one-room-and-dinette apartment and the apartment hotel are not conducive to the development of a wholesome family life.

Very often homes lack proper conveniences. Not all homes have heat, hot water, adequate toilet and bathing facilities. Men and women in other times, it is true, have lived without these conveniences. At one time, in fact, these conveniences were regarded as luxuries. But today in the case of most families they must be regarded not as luxuries and not even as conveniences but as necessities.

Those who live in rooming and boarding houses realize how difficult it is to manage when facilities are limited. Even the members of the same family living in the same house or apartment, especially if there are boarders or roomers, sometimes meet with considerable difficulties. It may sound trivial, but the lack of a schedule for the use of the bathroom is one cause of discord, especially when more than one member of the family works and when two or three must prepare themselves and leave at about the same time. "I know this is only a minor matter, but the confusion in our home before and during breakfast irritates all of us and unsettles me for a good part of the morning. I do not come to my work in the proper mood. And this, I know, is unfortunate." If those who are constructing new types of homes would only arrange for running water in the larger bedrooms as is now done in many rooming houses and in all hotels, this simple device would greatly relieve tension that develops in many families.

The furnishings of the home are also important. If a home is meagerly furnished or is barren and bleak, the children will try to escape from it as often as they can, and the result is that they spend their time upon the street and in dens of danger. When one young woman was asked why she met her friends, both young men and young women, on the street corner, she answered, "How can I bring them into my home? I am too ashamed of the place to stay there myself." These homes play a larger part in the development of delinquency than we are accustomed to think. "Our home is utterly unattractive; in fact, it is an ugly place. There is not a thing in our home to encourage us to remain there." Home conditions, in other words, play a larger part in the development of distress in family life than many appreciate. One of the most important facts that we must recognize is this:

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"We cannot rear the right kind of family in the wrong kind of home." This was the comment of one who had studied housing and who had a high regard for family life and family relationships. The part that the home plays in the development of family life is not as a rule given proper emphasis. It is utterly impossible for a family to cultivate right relations and gracious manners in a home that is utterly destitute of even the most elementary articles, utensils, and furniture.

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Outside the circle of the home lies the circle of the neighborhood. Some exceedingly significant social studies have been made that reveal the effect of the neighborhood upon social groups. It has been definitely established that when some groups move into certain neighborhoods, they develop higher rates of disease and delinquency. The very composition and character of the neighborhood itself seems to generate distress and to result in a deterioration. It is strange, therefore, that we so seldom study the relation of the neighborhood to the individuals and families that come to us for counsel and guidance. It is only reasonable to expect that men and women are influenced in their attitudes and actions by the conditions that surround them from day to day and especially from night to night, even by the very atmosphere of the neighborhood itself. In one family the husband and father was of a high-strung nervous temperament and easily awakened from his sleep. The family made the mistake of taking an apartment in a house located at the intersection of two busy thoroughfares. The noise of the delivery wagons early in the morning and the trucks and buses made it impossible for him to get the rest he required. It was not until the family

moved to a quiet neighborhood that the spirit of the family improved.

If the neighborhood is congested, unsanitary, filled with poisonous fumes and foul odors, it is obviously a dangerous place in which to live. If the neighborhood is infested with gangs and gambling dens and cheap dance halls and vicious motion-picture houses, it lowers the moral standard of the men and women who live therein and becomes a grave danger to the ethical life of the young people especially. The tone of the neighborhood unconsciously determines the tone of the people themselves. It is true that some boys and some girls escape and survive the evil influences that surround them. But the majority of young people and of men and women are not immune and in the course of time succumb. "All that I try to teach our children inside the home is lost as soon as they leave the door. The conditions in our block and our neighborhood are so bad that I am not surprised at the language our children use and at the way in which they misbehave." We cannot change neighborhoods overnight, but we can change the location of the home and move the family into a neighborhood with fewer hazards and with higher standards. It is often surprising to note the change that comes over the life of a family and all relationships when the family moves into another and a better neighborhood. It is often worth economizing in other items in order to achieve this change in outlook and status.

These conditions are obvious. But there are other conditions in neighborhoods that account for distress and that are not so evident and open. If the neighborhood lacks the customary conveniences that we now expect in every community, if it lacks, for example, proper schools and hospitals and dispensaries, the people may suffer losses in a number of ways. The absence of nursery

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schools and kindergartens may make it impossible for some mothers to secure the few hours of freedom and rest they so desperately need. The absence of these agencies may also mean the neglect of children if the mother for some reason is compelled to leave her home during the day and to work in another section of the city. Social workers and policemen in some neighborhoods know the little children who wander about the streets without proper food or care because there is no nursery school or kindergarten in their district. The absence of proper medical institutions and health centers may also lead to the neglect of health conditions in both individuals and families. Wherever health centers have been established and educational service programs developed, the health of the families has improved. "There is no asthma clinic within miles of our home," one woman said, "and I cannot leave the other children at home without care in order to take our son to the place where he could get proper treatment." In some neighborhoods this problem of medical care and health education is serious, and the consequences in terms of family welfare are exceedingly grave.

The absence of recreational centers may mean hardship for both children and their parents, especially during the hot months when it is so difficult to stay indoors. Play is now regarded as a natural and legitimate expression of childhood. Children will improvise their own play but may for want of better supervision and proper facilities do it in the wrong way and at the wrong time and in the wrong place. "How can you expect our young people to meet in the right way if there is no place in which they can come together frankly and openly?" This is one of the statements constantly made by mothers and fathers in discussing the conduct of their children. For family counseling, we must remember, is not limited to the

relationship of the husband and wife; it includes all the members of the family and the family as a whole. The absence of religious institutions, churches, and synagogues may cause real unhappiness. Catholic men and women want to live in a neighborhood in which there is a church convenient for mass; and Jewish men want a place in which to recite the memorial prayer or the Kaddish. One woman moved out of a new home and a newly developed neighborhood and returned to a congested section of the city. When she was pressed for a reason, she finally stated that in the new neighborhood there was no synagogue within reach, where her son could recite the memorial prayer for his father, who had died a few months before.

A neighborhood may, however, possess all the conveniences and may also be perfectly clean and sanitary, and still it may be an uncongenial place for the particular family in which we are interested. The racial, religious, and national composition of the neighborhood may be so different from that of the family that the family will feel like strangers in a strange land. We may not appreciate the fact fully, but it is a fact that men and women and young people especially suffer a sense of insecurity and loneliness because of the character of the very neighborhood in which they live. It may even go further than this. In times of economic stress and war they may become the subject of suspicion, or they may come to suspect others. There is a profound truth in the social teaching of the dislike of the unlike, especially when the unlike become a threat to our own status. The fact that we do not understand the language that others speak, that we do not understand their customs and culture, that we do not understand their institutions and organizations places us at a great disadvantage and gives us a feeling of uneasiness that easily passes into silent opposition, and

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this may quickly express itself in open hostility. In all work with men and women and families we cannot disregard the social principle of consciousness of kind.

The subtle influence that the neighborhood may exercise is illustrated in the case of a young woman whose distress was at first completely misunderstood. When she was about fourteen, she developed tuberculosis. This lesion was healed in the sanatorium, and she returned to her home and her school. At the age of eighteen she became highly nervous and woke up during the night frightened and screaming. A physical examination revealed no condition that would account for the nightmare. She was referred to a psychiatrist, who came to the conclusion that the thoughts and feelings of a sex nature she was suppressing during the day were breaking out at night through her dreams. When the counselor discussed the statement of the psychiatrist with her, she made only one comment: "You have known me for many years. Do you really think I am harboring such thoughts and feelings?" The counselor decided to visit the home and on the way observed the neighborhood. The young girl, it was evident, on the way home from work and on the way to and from the settlement that she attended was constantly accosted and subjected to insults and scenes that she deeply resented. After some discussion the family moved to another neighborhood, and in the course of a very short time the young girl's condition completely changed and the nightmares wholly disappeared. Neither she nor her family had been aware of the effect of the neighborhood upon her life and theirs.

## OCCUPATIONAL LIFE

Outside the circle of the neighborhood lies the circle of the occupational life of the individual and members of the family. Within this circle many conditions may



exist that serve as a cause of distress. Unsanitary conditions in the shop or factory or office, poor ventilation, insufficient lighting, inadequate conveniences and toilet facilities, even overcrowding may account for trouble that we meet in men and women. These conditions may lower the resistance and tone of the worker and unconsciously depress his spirit and may even result in impairment and incapacity of vital powers. The father of one family complained that he could not thread the needle of his machine without great difficulty. Something, he said, was wrong with his eyes. An examination by an eye specialist revealed the fact that his eyesight was failing even though he was in his early forties. The specialist could not explain why this man was losing his sight until an investigation brought the social facts together. For twenty years and more this man had been working as a machine operator in a factory with poor ventilation and very poor lighting arrangements. The constant strain of sewing on the machine and watching the needle in an insufficiently lighted area accounted for his condition and his distress. Nothing could be done to improve the man's eyesight, and it was necessary to change his occupation. Another man with sensitive eardrums lost his hearing almost completely through working in a boiler factory during the last war.

Accidents due to lack of proper safety devices, occupational diseases due to materials employed or to exigencies of the trade or profession, fatigue that is common in many occupations also may account for distress, and the man or woman may be unaware that these conditions are the true cause of the trouble. Fatigue is an insidious condition that may in time utterly unfit one for friendly association and marital companionship. Occupational diseases sometimes develop symptoms that the man or woman may not always understand and may altogether

misinterpret. One man complained of pains along the right side of his back and arm and leg. The first doctor in the dispensary thought it was rheumatism; the second doctor called it neuritis; a medical social worker with some experience in occupational diseases discovered that the man was engaged as a paper-box cutter and that he was compelled to lift and lower a heavy weight for ten hours a day. This he had done for eighteen years. When the doctors learned the facts, they diagnosed the case as one of occupational disease. Even minor accidents and mild occupational diseases seriously reflect themselves in behavior and condition conduct and family relationships. There is little sense in taking headache powders for headaches that are due to the occupation.

Overwork, which may mean long hours or high speed or too great intensity of application; low wages, which result in a lower standard of living and impoverishment; unemployment in all its forms, seasonal, episodic, cataclysmic, which means economic insecurity and destitution—all these conditions likewise may upon examination prove to be a cause or causes of trouble. Studies have been made that prove clearly the effect of these conditions upon the physical and mental health of men and women; but few realize how seriously these conditions influence the relationship of husband and wife and parents and children. The fact that a man is overworked makes it difficult for him to return to his family in a mood that makes him companionable. The fact that a woman is overworked through household drudgery and constant and unrelieved care of children may make it impossible for her to meet her husband in the mood that he expects. "How is it possible for me to take much interest in my home when I return from work too tired even to eat? I love my family and I would like to play with my children, but I am too weary to enjoy their

companionship when night comes." "I can hardly blame my wife for not discussing my work with me. She is not very strong, and I guess she is too worn out by the time supper is over."

The fact that men and women are constantly haunted by the fear of unemployment may throw a dark shadow over their whole life and gravely menace their family relationships. The right to work and to earn a living and to maintain oneself and family in decency and self-reliance means self-respect and lifts the level of family life. And still millions of men and women are periodically threatened with loss of work and income. Any study of marriage and family relationships that does not take this tragic fact into account leaves out one of the major causes of distress. During the decade of the Thirties millions of men and women were out of work part time or whole time and for periods that ranged from weeks and months to years. The damage that was done to family life it is difficult even to estimate. Dependency and destitution inevitably not only lower the standard of living; they shatter the very foundations on which the family must be built. "How can we build up our life together when we live in daily fear of eviction? We are overwhelmed with debts, and we spend our whole time in trying to discover ways to escape." This piteous reply came from members of every social group during the decade of despondency.

In addition to these conditions there are other conditions that are more subtle but none the less serious in their effect. A man or woman may be improperly trained or may be too inexperienced to do a certain form of work. And this may lead to disappointment and distress. A man or woman may be utterly unsuited for the type of work in which he or she is engaged, and this may lead to a feeling of frustration and defeat. Some men and

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women must have opportunity and space for the expression of the creative impulse, and when this is denied them, they become most unhappy. The very fact that some men and women have no definite aim, no clear objective, nothing worth while for which to work, is in itself a source of vague but nevertheless real distress. "My husband is an honest and intelligent man. But he made the mistake of cutting short his education. If he had only completed his course of engineering, he would now be established in a permanent position with a good income." "My wife is really an artist at heart. I know that she has ability and aspirations. But how can she express herself when she has no time for lessons and practice? Of course she is unhappy. She feels constantly frustrated and defeated in not realizing what in her is a deep desire."

The circle of the occupational life is so crowded with conditions that cause distress and suffering that it is most important to explore this circle with particular care. Negatively and positively the trade, the occupation, or the profession affects and shapes habits, attitudes, conduct in marriage and family life. Does the work men and women do leave them time, energy, and interest that will permit them freely to enjoy each other's comradeship? Does the work in which men and women are engaged outside the home distract and unfit them to any degree for marriage and family relationships? One man, a lawyer by profession, spent so many evenings of the week in preparing his cases for trial that his wife became thoroughly dissatisfied. He insisted that he needed time in which to study and to advance himself in his profession; she insisted that she needed his interest and companionship. He enjoyed working on his briefs at the office, but she did not enjoy remaining home or going out without him. They would not compromise,

and the eventual outcome was disruption and divorce in a marriage that had begun with a happy romance. The wife of many a doctor suffers loneliness and is unhappy because she cannot reconcile herself to the fact that her husband's patients have the first claim upon his time.

### LARGER SOCIAL LIFE

Outside the circle of the occupational life lies the large circle of our complex social life. This circle includes racial, religious, and cultural elements; economic and political segments; and community, national, and international areas. The elements, segments, and areas of this circle may seem distant from the distress of men and women and very remote from the trouble that comes to us in the field of marriage and family counseling. But the conditions that develop in this larger circle we soon discover may become direct and acute causes of distress, and distress that can be ascribed to no other source. Racial dislike and hostility are a frequent cause of distress in many parts of the country. The Negro, the Chinese, the Indians all suffer because they are of a different race. Their inability to live in any part of the city, that is, their residential restriction and segregation, and their inability to get work on the same terms and in the same places with White groups make their family life exceedingly difficult and mar their family relationships. Religious prejudice and animosity are a great cause of distress even in peace-time America. The Catholics in the South, the Protestants in some parts of New England, the Jews in many communities throughout the land suffer because they differ in religious tradition and belief from the majority. This religious element is not only a general source of distress; it shadows the marriage and family life of each group, especially in cases where intermarriage occurs.

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Conditions in our economic system and political organization constantly serve as a source of distress in the life of men and women and certainly of families. Not only the dislocations due to economic changes but so-called normal conditions in agriculture, industry, commerce, finance cause suffering. A drought means prolonged and intense misery; so does the introduction of new machinery and new methods and controls. Underconsumption due to low income, which in turn is due to unjust control and distribution of natural resources, deeply affects the family life and relationships of multitudes. The long and bitter struggle of the great mass of men and women to emancipate themselves from economic enslavement, to acquire a fair share of profits in economic life, to improve their own welfare, and to achieve control over their own destiny reflects itself directly in family life and family relationships. No adequate and scientific study has been made of the effect of economic change upon family structure, family organization, and family function. But even the minor material that has been assembled is sufficient to warrant the caution that we must not overlook the relation of problems on the inside of the family to depressions, panics, and economic collapse. Civil disability, curtailment of civil liberties, even disenfranchisement often cause great distress.

The present national and international tragedy of war is bringing suffering to an infinite number of men and women and families. The effect of war programs upon marriage and family life is incalculable. Marriage itself is menaced in many ways, and family life is almost completely disorganized. The disintegration that is taking place in the life of every community and in every country may not be checked and outgrown for generations to come. This disintegration cannot be ascribed to condi-

tions in any other circle, and unless we recognize this fact, we shall fail to make a correct diagnosis. Nations cannot be invaded, whole populations cannot be captured and transplanted, millions of people cannot be persecuted and massacred without destroying the framework and institution of the family. It will take generations to rebuild the family life of Europe and Asia; even to repair the damage done to those families that have escaped from the hell of Hitlerism will take time, patience, skill, and a deep concern with the family as the basic organization of social life. What the United States has done to aid the refugees to reestablish their family life in a new social environment is only the first step in the solution of an infinitely greater problem that the world must face as soon as the war ends and peace has been achieved.

These are the six circles we must study and explore in order to discover the cause or causes of distress: the circle of the individual, the family, the home, the neighborhood, the occupational life, and the larger social organization. The major cause of distress may be found in any one of these circles; but conditions in other circles may serve as minor causes of distress, that is, causes that contribute to or complicate or aggravate the distress that is due to the major cause. What appears to be the major cause in the beginning, however, may upon closer examination prove to be a minor cause. The emphasis that the people themselves place upon a condition may give it undue importance and may mislead us. Therefore it is necessary to proceed cautiously and to make at the outset only what is known as a tentative diagnosis. We may even find it necessary to revise our opinion more than once, just as doctors do, or even to reverse our judgment, as judges do. An important point to keep in mind always is that no two cases present the same set of facts arranged in exactly the same manner. It is true

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that we can place the causes of distress in a number of different categories and that we can classify our cases. But this does not mean that the cases are alike in content or even in outline.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon this point: Distress is seldom due to a simple cause. In the vast majority of cases the cause is complex; that is, it is composed of more than one element. These elements may lie within the same circle, or they may come out of different circles. This is important to keep before us not only in making a diagnosis but in planning a program of treatment. Many programs of treatment fail because they do not include all the elements that cause the distress. It is true that some minor causes are dependent upon the major cause and will disappear if the major cause is properly treated. Pains in the arms or legs may disappear if the infected tonsils are removed. But it is often true that minor causes are not dependent upon any other condition; therefore it is necessary to study the case carefully as a whole, and then to break down the complex condition into its separate and proper elements. This is not a caution against the old danger of confusing the symptom with the disease; it is another danger altogether, the danger of failure to see and to understand and to treat all parts of the problem.



## CHAPTER 12

### SOCIAL TREATMENT

The first step in social treatment is to formulate a *plan of care*. This sounds axiomatic and even gratuitous. But there is the danger that some men and women engaged in social work and in marriage and family counseling may not plan out the program of treatment carefully; and there is also the danger that some may not plan in accordance with the accepted principles of social care. Many of us are inclined from time to time to act as opportunists, to deal with conditions and situations as they arise from day to day or from visit to visit or from conference to conference. We must admit that we do this in our own daily life and routine and that we may be tempted to practice the same program or lack of program in our work with others. The truth is that it takes time and patience to plan out a program of work for a day or a week or a month; and we know that unless we plan out with care and foresight, we shall waste time and we may fail to achieve our objective. In marriage and family counseling the plan of care or social treatment requires not only time and patience but full knowledge of the facts, severe training in methods, and extended experience with men and women.

Some of us not infrequently may make the mistake of seeing and treating only the symptoms of the trouble. Pain is only a symptom and not the disease itself. Emotional excitement is only a symptom and is not the condition out of which the distress arises. Disagreement, discord, and dissension are symptoms and not the causes

of the suffering that brings men and women to us. And still the plan of treatment is often based upon the symptoms rather than upon the condition that serves as the cause of the trouble. It is important certainly to soothe the pain, to relieve the distress, and to assist men and women to resolve their difficulties, even on the surface. And this is undoubtedly to be included within the plan of treatment. But we cannot allow ourselves to stop at this point, no matter how simple the case may be and no matter how crowded we may find ourselves for time. If the disagreement is due to differences in temperament, then temperament must be included within the plan of treatment. If the discord is due to divergences in outlooks on life and life's problems, then these outlooks must be included within the plan of treatment. If the dissension is due to defects or disturbances within the personality of either the man or the woman or both, then these defects and disturbances must be included within the plan of treatment. Otherwise, these basic causes of trouble will not only continue to poison the relationships of the men and women but will become the source of recurrent and aggravated symptoms and suffering.

Another mistake that we may be in danger of making is that of seeing only one segment of the case and of treating only one factor thereof. In the discussion of diagnosis we learned that distress is seldom simple, that is, due to a single condition or cause. In the great majority of cases that come to us distress is complex; it is due not to one but to a number of conditions and causes. Usually we discover that there is a major condition that serves as the source of trouble and that the trouble is complicated by minor conditions that contribute to or aggravate the distress. It is necessary, therefore, to see the case as a whole and to include within the plan of treatment all the factors that operate to cause or complicate the distress.

In the case of one couple, for example, the major cause of distress was biological, sexual maladjustment. But, in addition and probably as a consequence, there was difficulty on the psychological level, disagreement and tension and even alienation. And beyond this difficulty there was conflict in the ethical area of the life of these two people. They did not agree upon standards of conduct and the concept of marriage. The maladjustment upon the biological level was easily solved through the instruction of a gynecologist. But the plan of treatment could not limit itself to this one segment of their life. It was necessary to expand the program of care to include both the psychological and the ethical problems presented in the case. This is what is meant by including all factors and treating the case as a whole.

The first principle that must guide us in formulating a plan is *flexibility*. No plan can remain fixed and rigid. Changes constantly occur in cases. Changes, in fact, occur in any one person as the days and weeks pass. How much more must we expect changes to occur in a case in which two or more persons and their relationships are involved! New evidence will appear as the case unfolds and as our contacts increase. It would be surprising if this did not happen. In other words, our plan of treatment must necessarily be based on the evidence that is available at any one time; but the plan must be flexible enough to change with the changing body of evidence and with the introduction of new facts. One young woman undoubtedly possessed musical talent; she seemed not only interested but even enthusiastic. A plan was worked out that would provide her with lessons and prepare her for a musical career. As the months passed, however, it became evident that she lacked the power to concentrate her energies and to practice the number of hours required for the cultivation of her

gift. It would have been most unwise to insist upon a plan that she herself was unable to execute. Instead of making music her vocation she was compelled to make music an avocation.

We may even find it advisable and necessary not only to modify the plan we have formulated but to discard the plan altogether. This is not always an easy thing to do. We do not like to go to the trouble of working out an entirely new plan. It takes time and effort; but there is nothing else to do when we discover that our plan is based on wrong assumptions. In the case of one couple that disagreed with each other about matters that they both admitted were trivial there seemed to be present the basis on which to rebuild their life together. But the plan that was worked out failed because the young people attempted to solve their problem while living in the home of the bride's parents. It was necessary to discard this plan and to establish the young people in their own home and to leave them free and unhampered in the reconstruction of their married life. It may be that we are, strangely enough, enamoured of our plan and feel that it would discredit us if we were to discard it. On the contrary, to discard a plan, even one that has required much work and that we like greatly, is not a confession of failure but is a confirmation of our understanding and our courage.

We must be ready to go even further than modifying or discarding our plan; we must be prepared to change the counselor or the consultant who after all is a part of the plan. A very wise physician, one of the ablest of diagnosticians, said in a certain case, "I know what is the trouble with this woman, and I know what needs to be done; but I am not the person to do it." He generously transferred the case with his diagnosis and plan of treatment to another physician who was more suited to the

patient's temperament. This procedure may and does become necessary in all forms of social work and especially in marriage and family counseling. No prescription is good for all cases, even cases with the same disease. Patients have their idiosyncrasies, and no man or woman is equal to each and every case. In fact, some failures in this field are due not to a wrong diagnosis or to a wrong plan of treatment but to the wrong worker or counselor in charge. "I am sure that man understands my case. He knows me, and he knows my husband well. But he is too impatient to really help me. He is so able and quick himself that he cannot bear with my own hesitations and indecisions." To surrender a case in which we are deeply interested to another counselor is not an admission of defeat but an evidence of experience and insight and wisdom.

Another principle in social care is the *unit of treatment*. Fifty years ago the individual was generally taken as the unit of treatment. It was the individual that we saw and who was in distress and in whom we were interested. It was only natural, therefore, that the care or plan of treatment should be limited to this one person. In some fields of service, for example, work with boys and girls, this is still the program. In many settlements and community centers the club leaders concern themselves chiefly if not solely with the boys and girls who enroll in the groups; they seldom go beyond this. It may be that in some cases the individual alone needs to be considered. The cause of distress may lie altogether in the circle of the individual, the circle of the man or the woman or the youth or the child; and it may be that nothing outside this circle affects the distress one way or another. If the cause of distress is an infected tonsil in a child, it is not necessary to go beyond the individual; if the cause of distress is a wrong habit in a woman that needs to be corrected, it is not necessary to go beyond the individual;

if the cause of distress is lack of proper vocational training in a man, it may be possible to limit treatment to the man himself.

Some social workers are of the opinion that it is unnecessary to go beyond the individual in any case that comes to us. As a result of the new emphasis on defects in personality as causes of distress they believe not only that it is unnecessary but that it is unwise social policy to venture beyond the needs that the individual himself presents. Many psychiatrists seem to think that they can learn all that they need to know about a man or woman by studying the individual. And there is no doubt that a careful, thorough, and scientific study of the individual does reveal causes of trouble and that these causes can be treated without concerning oneself with other members of the family. Yet even the simplest form of maladjustment means maladjustment between one person and another or one person and some factor in his environment. It is possible, of course, to solve this problem of maladjustment through the treatment of the individual who consults us if the cause of the maladjustment lies within this person. We cannot be sure, however, that the maladjustment is due to this one person until we study those with whom this person is associated and the environment in which he lives. In other words, in the vast majority of cases there are other factors and other conditions that serve as a cause of distress, and it is therefore most unwise for us to ignore these other factors and to confine our program of treatment to the individual.

About forty years ago many social workers came to the conclusion that it was not the individual but the family that should be taken as the unit of treatment, chiefly for three reasons. In the first place, the family is the unit of suffering. If one member of the family is in distress, the other members of the family also suffer whether the dis-

tress is due to sickness or delinquency or unemployment or moral disintegration. To leave the other members of the family untouched is therefore to leave a large part of the case uncovered. During one infantile paralysis epidemic the little children were brought to the isolation building of a large city hospital in New York. The parents were not allowed to enter the building or to see their children until they were discharged. The medical social worker in charge of this group of children realized the anxiety of the mothers and fathers and every evening wrote a postal card to the parents of every child informing the parents of the child's condition and progress. This worker understood the invisible bonds that bind the members of the family together. Those who work with individuals within the walls of an institution are sometimes in danger of forgetting the members of the family on the outside.

In the second place, trouble in one member of the family is usually a danger signal of trouble in other members of the family. If one member of a family has tuberculosis, the plan of treatment cannot be limited to that one member. All members of the family are now examined and carefully watched. If one member of a family is unstable and irresponsible, the plan of treatment should not limit itself to this one member; it should include a study and supervision of all the other members as well. Not only are some defects transmitted from parent to child; some defects run through many members of the same family and express themselves in different ways. One young boy that entered the office of a social agency in search of assistance proved to be a case of mental defectiveness. A study of the family brought to light the fact that a brother was in a reformatory, a sister in a home for wayward girls, and the father in an insane asylum. The mother was the only member of the family who was

regarded as normal. In marriage and family counseling we cannot limit ourselves to the man and woman and the dissension that has developed between them. The atmosphere of discord and tension and antagonism that they create unquestionably affects their children. And the children therefore must be included within the plan of treatment. One young girl said quite correctly to the counselor, "You seem to be concerned only with my father and mother. You do not seem to realize that I also suffer and need care."

In the third place, it is evident that it is difficult, even impossible, to accomplish much with one member of the family without the cooperation of the other members. Other members of the family may even hinder the treatment and the progress if they are not included in the program. All this is true in every form of social work, and it is doubly true in the field of marriage and family counseling. We cannot treat the wife without the husband, or the husband without the wife, or the children without the parents, or even parents and children, in some cases, without the cooperation of other relatives. One man listened very attentively to the discussion and advice of the counselor and then stated very frankly, "I understand just what you mean and what you want me to do. But I am afraid I have not the strength or the courage to do this myself. If you could only persuade my wife to cooperate with me, I am sure that I could carry out your recommendations and solve my problem." "If my husband would only help me a little more," one woman complained, "I am sure that I could outgrow these weaknesses of which he speaks and learn to keep myself and my home in better condition." It is therefore evident that other members, perhaps in most cases all members of the family, must be included in any adequate plan of treatment.



We cannot, however, stop with the circle of the family any more than we can stop with the circle of the individual. Conditions in other circles that we have explored in order to discover the cause or causes of distress may also have to be included in the plan of treatment. If conditions in the home cause or complicate the distress, then these conditions need to be changed. A home with more rooms may have to be secured; better furnishings may have to be purchased; the wife and mother may have to be instructed how to keep the home clean and in better order. If conditions in the neighborhood cause or contribute to the distress, then it may be necessary to move the family out of the neighborhood. There is no use in trying to save a boy from delinquency if his delinquency is due to evil association and gangs in the neighborhood in which he lives. There is no use in trying to make a family feel contented in a neighborhood that is utterly uncongenial and alien in language and population. We must recognize that men and women naturally seek the association of those they understand and those who understand them. Only those who have worked with immigrant groups appreciate the difficulties these groups suffer in adjusting themselves to a new environment in a new country.

If conditions in the circle of the occupational life cause or complicate or contribute to the distress, then these conditions also must be considered and included within the program of treatment. It may be necessary to retrain a man or woman for another form of employment in order to increase the family income and to establish the family in greater economic security. "It is utterly impossible," one man replied, "for me to maintain my family decently. They are right in complaining that I do not earn enough. But it is not my fault; I was never taught a trade. If I could only be trained as machinist,

I could earn enough. I know I have mechanical skill that is undeveloped." The man was right and the plan succeeded. "I am not a success in my profession," another man confessed. "I never wanted to study medicine. But my parents insisted that I must follow in my father's footsteps and continue the tradition in our family. And my wife refuses to allow me to think of any other field of work. The truth is I have a distaste for medicine, and I cannot take either a personal or a scientific interest in the patients who come to me." It is a waste of time to attempt to adjust the members of a family to each other on the psychological level when the prime cause of distress is occupational and untreated.

If conditions in the larger social circle, the cultural, the economic, the political, the international, are a source of distress even at a distance and remotely and seriously affect the case, these conditions must be considered. It may not be possible for us as counselors to do much or even to do anything to change these conditions. They may be altogether beyond our own control. We may not, for example, be able to change the racial prejudice or the religious intolerance or the national hostility that vitiates and envenoms the life of a community. We may not be able to change an economic system that makes overwork, unemployment, and destitution a recurrent experience for a multitude of families. We may not be able to change the political order that denies large groups of men and women citizenship and civil liberty and that imposes upon them unbearable disabilities. We may not be able to change an international organization that demands the surrender of property and the sacrifice of human life, and that makes peace impossible and war inevitable. These conditions, we must recognize, can be changed only through the social action of the community, the country, and organized society. But in planning our

program of treatment it is necessary to know what we cannot do as well as what we can do, to know the limitations under which we must labor as well as the possibilities that are open to us. This is especially true when we are dealing with families of minority groups, whether they be racial, religious, national, or cultural in character.

The individual, it is now evident, cannot be the unit of treatment as we once thought; nor can the family be the unit of treatment as we later concluded. The plan of treatment must include the conditions in the home, the neighborhood, the occupational life, and the larger social environment, the conditions in every circle related to the distress. If we disregard any one of these conditions and especially the major factors, not only will the plan of treatment be limited in scope, but to the degree that it is limited it will fail of accomplishment. Perhaps there is no greater source of failure than this. Again and again in studying our cases we are compelled to confess this fact. We succeeded in changing the habits of a young woman; but we failed to correct the attitudes of her parents. We succeeded in correcting the relationship of two young people who misunderstood each other; but we failed to move them out of the home of the young woman's family and to free them of the matriarchal influence of the mother. We succeeded in persuading a man to dissolve an extra-matrimonial alliance; but we failed to separate him from the social group that did not take marriage too seriously and that was in large part responsible for his misconduct. In all these cases success was only temporary, and failure followed.

A third principle that should guide us in formulating a plan of treatment is *differentiation*. People differ in many ways from each other, and these differences cannot be ignored in the approach, in the diagnosis, and certainly not in the plan of treatment. In other words, all people

cannot be treated alike. One fundamental difference is sex. Men and women differ from each other physically, of course, and they also differ from each other psychologically. Both the physical and the psychological differences have their important implications. Men and women are equal before the law or should be, but they are not equal in physical strength. The very structure and physiology of woman make it inadvisable for her to undertake the same physical burdens that a man is able to carry. She may have as great or even greater dexterity and endurance, but she has not the same sheer physical constitution. The nervous and glandular system of woman and the reproductive organs make it impossible for her to engage in continuous activity. Even when all conditions are normal, allowances must be made for periodic variations and interruptions and maternity leaves. When conditions are abnormal, when the ovaries are overactive or the uterus out of proper position, normal activity is not only inadvisable but impossible. These are conditions that do not occur in the male sex.

As man and woman are not equal to each other in their physical constitution, so they are not equal to each other in their psychological make-up and reactions. The man is normally more aggressive and has one set of interests; the woman is not more passive but more receptive and has another set of interests. In planning out a course of treatment for a man it is important to remember that his major interest and concern are probably his work, his business, his profession. "Yes, I should like to take a vacation, but I cannot leave my office." This is the first thing of which the man thinks. "I know it would help me greatly if I could go away to recover from my nervous state and to regain my composure. But how can I leave my home and my children?" This is the thing of which the woman thinks first. It is therefore necessary in the

case of the man to include his business in the plan of treatment and in the case of the woman to include her children and her home. Even an elementary knowledge of anatomy and physiology and psychology would prevent us from assuming that a plan of treatment worked out for a man will commend itself likewise to a woman. The plan, in other words, must be elastic enough to cover all the differences that are inherent in sex, that are implied in the fact that one person is a man and the other is a woman.

Another difference is the obvious one of age. Infants, children, adolescents, adults, the aged—all these age groups differ from each other and cannot be treated in the same way, nor can they always be treated by the same person. Infants have infant needs and require someone who understands them. That is why pediatrics has developed as a special field of medicine and also why we have a special group of infant nurses. Children have their own circle of interests and require someone who can understand and enter into their own range of experience. That is why the new movements in education begin not with subjects to be taught but with the interests of children to be cultivated and the powers and capacities to be developed. Adolescents, it is well known, do not understand themselves, and they are convinced that no one understands them. They are just emerging out of one world in which there is a sense of security and approaching a new world in which everything seems uncertain and bewildering. This is the group that most needs study and service, and still there are few men and women who can work successfully with this group, who can awaken their confidence and win their cooperation. Perhaps there is no age group for which it is more difficult to plan out a course of treatment, for the adolescent is typically and characteristically unstable, spasmodic, and episodic in

make-up. Every plan we formulate may at any moment explode in the hands of an adolescent.

Adults are less difficult but difficult enough, we discover, in the work that must be done. Adulthood assumes maturity, but we must not forget that not all men and women mature with adulthood. The truth is that few of us grow up in all parts and at the same pace. A woman may be twenty-five years old and may have the physical development that this age assumes; but at the age of twenty-five she may have the mental development of an adolescent and the emotional life of a child and be as irresponsible as an infant. One of the most difficult cases proved to be a man who had the physique of his age, that is, thirty, the mental development of a man of forty-five, but the emotional instability of a boy. The aged, of course, present fewer problems, but even in this group there are not only infirmities but fixed ideas and often vague fears. It is therefore sometimes very difficult to work out a plan of care for old people with any assurance that they will cooperate with us. It is doubtful if there is any one person who is able to serve all these groups with equal success. We may seem to understand the needs, but we may find it impossible because of our own limitations to accommodate our mind and our manner to all groups with equal facility. In planning treatment this fact must be kept in the foreground.

Individuals differ from each other also in temperament. Some men and women are by nature cooperative, and some are antagonistic; some are cowardly, and some are courageous; some are timid and fearful of every change and of every risk, and others are adventurous and daring and ready to undertake what seems the most difficult task. These temperamental differences determine the content and the character of the plan of treatment. Experience teaches us that the plan that will work with

a person who is stable and steady will not work with a person who is mercurial and volatile in temperament; that a plan that will work with a person who is strong and unafraid will not work with a person who is weak and frightened at the very thought of the morrow. One woman stammered, "I do not see how I can continue to live even from day to day. I sit in the lobby of my hotel until the last person leaves because I am afraid to go to my room where I know I shall be alone." Another woman exclaimed, "Tell me what course to take, and I shall take it at once." Both these women were of about the same age, and both had similar problems with which they were wrestling. It is perfectly clear that the two could not be treated in the same way and that a different plan of treatment had to be carefully worked out for each one.

Individuals differ likewise in their cultural development. Some men and women are uncultivated and crude, and some are refined and sensitive. It is a grave mistake not to recognize these cultural differences in planning out a program of care. It is difficult enough when we are working with individuals who come to consult us in successive conferences. For the steady stream of cases through the office of a social agency may obscure and cover up somewhat these differences in the cultural development of men and women. The almost unconscious and inevitable consequence of uninterrupted interviews is that we may come to treat all cases alike. This, of course, is regrettable, and the result is not only unhappiness for the individual but failure in our work partial or complete. Our official and fixed manner may mean little to one man, but it may offend and alienate another. In marriage and family counseling cultural differences may and do make our work doubly difficult, for in this work two different individuals compose the same case. The chief cause of trouble in one case lay in the fact that the

man was common and coarse and the woman was cultured and refined. Strange as it may appear, such marriages are contracted and do persist for many years. The woman in this case was deeply hurt by the cheap and vulgar manner of her husband, but the man was utterly unable to understand what was wrong with his wife. The plan of treatment had to include both the man and the woman and their cultural differences.

In addition to sex, age, temperament, and cultural development there is also the difference in social background. Differences in race, religion, nationality, language are not only important; they are basic. In medicine and surgery the social background may make little difference. Pneumonia is pneumonia, and the treatment does not depend upon the race or religion or nationality or language of the patient. The sulfa drugs will act in the same way whether the patient is of one race or another, whether the patient speaks English or Spanish. An appendix is an appendix and must be treated in the same manner no matter in whom it is found. The operative technique is the same whether the patient is of one religion or another, whether the patient comes from Russia or from France. In social work and in marriage and family counseling, however, the differences in social background do determine the plan of treatment. There is truth, no doubt, in the statement that there is fundamentally one language, the language of the human heart. But in actual practice and in conversation with men and women we find it necessary to speak the language that they understand. To speak the language that they understand means not only to use the same words but to express in our conversation all that the words themselves imply, the connotations as well as the content, the overtones that often mean more than the direct and expressed vocabulary itself.



The more we study the social background, the more we realize its significance and the danger of alienating those whose customs and habits, whose superstitions and beliefs, whose attitudes and group relationships we may not fully understand. The Cross means one thing to the Christian, another thing to other groups; the Crescent means one thing to the Mohammedan, another thing to other religions; the Star of David means one thing to the Jew, another thing to men and women of other faiths. The Tuberculosis Association, for example, could not reach the orthodox Jewish group for many years solely because the Association printed a red cross upon the cover of their literature. It is even doubtful whether a person of one race or religion or nationality or language can fully understand and successfully treat a person of another race or religion or nationality or language. It is certainly difficult for a man who speaks only English to understand and to treat a man who speaks only Russian. It is also difficult for an American Protestant to understand and to serve a Hindu of the East. This is not because prejudice may intervene, though prejudice may unconsciously condition our approach and attitude. It is more because of the fact that each group has developed its own group life, a life the subtle meanings of which it is difficult for members of other groups to understand and to share.

The fourth principle that should guide us in planning out treatment is the *hygienic method*. This is very different from, in fact, the direct opposite of, the drug method that we are in danger of employing. Drugs are necessary in medicine to quiet the patient, to stimulate energies, to correct physiological action, to combat infection. But once these have been accomplished, the doctors today prefer to rely on hygiene. One danger of the drug method is that while it relieves the pain, it may create an appe-

tite. Another danger is that some drugs when taken for too long a time lose their power or may weaken and even poison the system. A third and less recognized danger is the unconscious resistance that may prove more damaging than the condition the drug is designed to alleviate. One man told his family physician that he was disturbed and could not sleep. The physician gave him a prescription for a simple sleeping powder. The psychiatrist, however, who was also treating this man said to him, "I would rather not have you take any sleeping medicine. Men and women who are disturbed for the reasons that you are inwardly and unconsciously resist sedatives and sleeping powders." Experience proved that the general practitioner was wrong and the psychiatrist was right. It is generally known that patients who resist anesthetics have a more difficult time than those who submit quietly. In some cases the resistance may even hinder recovery.

In work with men and women and certainly in the field of marriage and family counseling it is necessary at times to employ agents that will soothe or stimulate the man or woman or that will correct conditions and combat evils. In emergencies it is often necessary to quiet men and women through the exercise of our own powers. This happens frequently when men and women come to us in a disturbed and excited state. It is also necessary in some cases to urge men and women to do things that they would not do of their own accord, to substitute our own determination for theirs. This is especially necessary when men and women come to us discouraged and despondent and unable to arouse themselves to action. It is also necessary at times for us to direct and supervise the conduct of men and women. This is especially true when men and women lose their sense of balance and direction and are in danger of taking the wrong path. In this condition they need not only guidance but control.

In a few cases it is even necessary for us to enter into the life of men and women and to protect them against themselves. In other words, it is necessary for us on occasion to act for people when they are in such a state that they cannot act for themselves. When men and women are in this state, we must have the courage and the will to say to them, "You must do this," or "You must not do that." To act otherwise in such cases is only to invite defeat and disaster.

The great danger of this method is that it will weaken the power of initiative and action in men and women; that it will impoverish them spiritually; that it will encourage them to depend too little upon themselves and too much upon us. Nothing could be worse than this. If a child is so inexperienced and bewildered that he cannot choose for himself, it may be necessary for us to choose for him; but we must educate him to the point where he is able to make his own choice. If a woman is so mentally confused that she cannot decide for herself, it may be necessary for us to decide for her; but we must train her to the point where she will be able to make her own decisions. If a man is so bewildered and fearful that he cannot act for himself, it may be necessary for us to act for him; but we must teach him how to employ his own powers and to cultivate his own sense of independence. Dependence is dangerous no matter in what area it develops—the mental or the emotional, the economic or the political. In all cases we must study the people we serve very carefully to be sure that they are actually unable to think and act for themselves, that they are truly in a temporary state of paralysis of thought and movement. Many men and women misunderstand their own state. It is not only wise social policy; it is good ethical practice to observe this rule: Never do for others what others are able to do for themselves.

The hygienic method employs agencies and forces that build up the native powers of men and women. Today health workers and health organizations employ more and more the agencies of nutrition and sunshine and oxygen and rest in restoring the human body to normal efficiency. If vitamins and calories and minerals are lacking in the diet, the diet must be changed in order to nourish the body properly. If lesions are slow in healing, the healing power of the sun is invoked. Only within the last generation have we come to apply scientifically what men and women have known for ages, namely, that the sun not only is the source of light and warmth but actually does rise with healing on its wings. In extreme cases of prostration medical men introduce saline solution and glucose into the veins of the patient; and surgeons now employ transfusion in order to restore the strength of men and women whose own strength has reached a low level. These new methods developing in the field of health measure the increasing confidence that medical men have not in drugs but in the agencies that build up bone and muscle and the nervous system and blood stream of the human body.

In the field of social work and marriage and family counseling there are other factors that can be employed in the same or similar ways. Within and without men and women there are great reservoirs upon which we can draw, mental, emotional, and spiritual. These reservoirs, these sources of energy and power, we are now beginning to understand, and when we understand them better, we shall come to have more faith in their potency and their possibilities. Men and women, we now recognize, really have greater courage and power of endurance than they themselves believe. We all have. We face and endure what would seem unendurable if we were told in advance. We often think we have not the strength to

suffer the losses that come with the years, especially in times like these. But when the first shock passes, strength in some manner comes to our aid, such strength as we never knew we possessed. This is one of the lessons that a long life of experience teaches us over and over again. Men and women also possess greater patience, generosity, idealism, true heroism than they or we are accustomed to think. We all reveal these qualities when crises come. The patience of the poor, the generosity of the lowly, the idealism of the common folk, the heroism of even the simplest people are a constant source of amazement to those who have the privilege of working with them.

It is true that some men and women are in danger of growing hard when the trials and tragedies of life come; some may also grow bitter; and some may even grow vindictive. But it is a part of the plan of treatment to save men and women from becoming hard and bitter and vindictive. It is for us to teach them that hardness of heart will only hinder them in meeting their problems. It is for us to help them to understand that bitterness only distorts their vision and perverts their perspective and makes it impossible for them to see their own life clearly and to see it whole. It is for us to convince them that revenge and vindictiveness only poison the well-springs of the spirit and make it impossible for them to meet men and women in a spirit of justice. No man or woman who is hard or bitter or vindictive can possibly be just; and just they must be if they are to solve their problems in the right way. When we do these things, when we call into action these inward and often unsuspected powers of men and women, we are employing the hygienic method; we are building up the structure of their spiritual life and restoring to them the spiritual strength they need to face life anew.

All these powers need development, but more than this they need discipline. Discipline, however, does not mean suppression. Suppression is always dangerous, no matter in what field it is practiced. Muscle movements, emotions, and thought that are suppressed run into subterranean channels. There they are likely to take dark and distorted forms and to break out into explosive expression. On the other hand, what is sometimes called self-expression is also dangerous. Uncontrolled and undirected expression of physical energy, of impulses and emotions, and even of ideas leads not to a life of liberty but to a life of license. This system or cult current during the last quarter of a century gives the individual an exaggerated notion of the importance of his own thoughts, no matter how infantile, and of his own feelings, no matter on how low a level. Self-expression makes the man or woman a lawless and irresponsible member of society. The devious conduct of young people today and the increase in delinquency in our time are in large part the result of this cult of self-expression. Men and women have come to believe that they are altogether right in expressing in conduct whatever thoughts come to their mind, whatever emotions stir within them, whatever impulses flash into being, no matter how transitory. The outcome is an utterly undisciplined generation.

If the powers that reside within human beings are to serve the highest ends, these powers must be educated, trained, disciplined. In order to achieve discipline they must have a purpose and objective, a goal. We discipline the muscles of the body in order that we may do certain things that we desire, in order that we may walk or race or wrestle or play the violin. We discipline our mental powers in order that we may reach our designated objective, in order that we may read literature or solve mathematical problems or practice a profession. We do not

suppress our muscle and mental powers, nor do we leave them to undirected and uncontrolled forms of expression. In the same way men and women must learn to discipline their impulses and their emotions, their ambitions and aspirations. In other words, they must set for themselves standards and fashion for themselves ideals in accordance with which they mean to develop. Without standards of conduct and ideals in life it is impossible for men and women to cultivate an integrated, self-reliant, and maturely rounded personality. There is no short cut to character. Discipline is difficult, but it is indispensable to our spiritual development. This teaching is confirmed by experience as well as by religious systems.

The fifth and a most important principle of treatment is *cooperation*. We speak constantly of cooperation, but we sometimes forget what it really means, that it means working together. Men and women must work with us, and we must work with men and women. If we fail to work with them or they refuse to work with us, there can be no cooperation. There are, of course, men and women who are so constituted that they cannot work with others; they resist every procedure that is recommended, and they resent every effort that is made even in their own interest. This group fortunately is not large, and there is little if anything that we can do to serve them. When a man or woman says to us, "I appreciate your efforts, but I must solve my problem in my own way. I do not need any assistance," it is very difficult to make further progress. A larger group is composed of the men and women who perhaps can but who will not cooperate with us. They reject every plan we propose and ridicule every move we make in order to save them. These men and women are extremely determined and difficult. Now and then it may be possible to modify their manner and to alter their attitude, but as a rule we come

to a sudden stop when a man or woman says, "I do not want your advice, and I do not care for your counsel." To continue to work with these men and women is to spend on them strength that would be better invested in the service of others.

Not only do some men and women refuse to work with us, but they also refuse to give us their reasons. This is both irritating and baffling. We must remember, however, that sometimes men and women do not know why they do or do not do things, that the reasons are not clear to themselves and therefore cannot easily be expressed to us. This is particularly true of those who are emotionally disturbed and mentally confused. And in addition to this group there are those who deliberately conceal their motives, their reasons for action. There is no way in which we can compel them to tell us why, nor can we coerce these men and women into cooperation. We may be convinced not only that the course they take is wrong but that it will lead to disaster. We may even suffer ourselves as we see them suffer the consequences of their own unwise conduct. One man bluntly said, "I have the right to go to hell in my own way." No one certainly has the right to destroy himself, and it is distracting to stand helpless in the presence of destruction. But there are times when no other course is open to us. If we fail to reconcile ourselves to this fact, we only invite disappointment and dissipation of our own powers.

Even when men and women are willing to work with us, we are not always prepared to work freely and cordially with them. Planning a course of treatment and translating this plan of treatment into practice consume time and, furthermore, require concentration of thought and constant expenditure of energy. Unfortunately, we are not always ready or in the mood to give the time, the concentration, and the energy that are needed. We think



we can plan more quickly without people than with them; and we think we can do things much faster without their help than with it. This is probably true, for we are better trained, more experienced, and above all we have become, we know, efficient. We must not forget, however, that as counselors we are also serving as educators and that the education of men and women is a part of the program of treatment. Formulating the plan is only one part and a part in which the men and women we serve must share. In addition to the formulation of a plan it is necessary to do much more. It is necessary to analyze every problem carefully with those who consult us and to guide them in reaching a solution, which means often a reeducation of the person and a reconstruction of the man's or woman's personality. "I know that I need to retrain myself and to develop new attitudes. But I also know that I cannot do this alone. I do not understand the way in which to do it. I feel like a child who wants to be a musician but who does not know how." This statement illustrates the need that many men and women feel and a need that we must be prepared to meet.

Men and women and even young people and children, however, often resent the efforts of others, especially outsiders, to do for them things that concern their own welfare and affect their own future. They rightly feel that they should have a voice in determining their own affairs and in deciding upon their course of action. And we may discover that they are not only right but wise in taking this position. They may know more about themselves and about their own capabilities and limitations than we do. They may have plans of their own that are well worth considering and that at least should be carefully discussed. We must assume that men and women and also young people who have difficulties and are in distress have been striving to solve their own problems and that

they have worked out plans of their own, at least in a partial and tentative form. These plans, no matter how immature, they would like to have us consider even though they may not state this explicitly. In fact, one of the first questions we should ask is this: "Now what do you think should be done?" What they think should be done may be unwise, it may be impracticable, or it may even be impossible. But until we have convinced them of the impossibility or the impracticability or the un wisdom of their own plan, we cannot win their cooperation for our plan.

One way in which to persuade men and women to recognize the un wisdom, the impracticability, or the impossibility of their plan is to suggest to them an alternative so subtly that they will come to think that the alternative is their own. "Have you ever thought of doing this or of doing that?" "What do you think of following this or that procedure?" "Such and such are the factors involved in this case. Let us consider the different courses of action that could be taken." As a rule, they will agree to review the different courses, and if we are skillful, it will not be too difficult to arrange the arguments in such a way as will persuade them to adopt the plan that we think best. This requires tact and patience, but it also requires something else—a willingness on our part to allow them to believe that the plan originated in their own minds. It is important to them to have the credit for thinking it through, but it should not be important to us. If they are discouraged, it will undoubtedly hearten them to believe that they are able to assist themselves. They will work much more earnestly with a plan that they believe to be their own than with a plan that is imposed upon them, and if we are wise, we shall cooperate with equal earnestness and greater understanding.

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If this method fails, as it sometimes will, there is nothing left for us to do but to allow men and women to try out their own plans. Nothing else will prepare them to consider other procedures. This determination to try out their own may prove costly in time and strength and funds, but it is one of the things in counseling service to which we must learn to reconcile ourselves. The danger is not that we shall allow them to try out their own plans but that in disappointment and impatience we may be tempted to dismiss them altogether. We may think that any further effort on our part will only be a waste. In the course of the years, however, we come to realize how unwise this action on our part really is. Instead of dismissing men and women, even when they are stubborn and obstinate, we should endeavor to keep in close touch with them. In fact, we should say, "I do not agree with your plan; I doubt very much whether it will work; but I will cooperate with you as far as I am able." This will encourage men and women to return to us when their own plans fail. In other words, we must do nothing to alienate people who are in distress, and we certainly must not fail them in their hour of need solely because they insist upon working out a program of which we disapprove. This is not good counseling service; on the contrary, it is an evidence of our own inexperience and inexpertness.

Cooperation means more than working with the man and woman who come to see us. It means working with the other members of the family and with other individuals and with agencies that are interested. We may at times think that independent action on our part is the quickest and the wisest, but experience teaches us throughout the years that we can eventually achieve more if we enlist the cooperation of brothers or sisters or children or other relatives. If they understand what we

are attempting to accomplish, they can aid us in many ways, by suggestion, by reports, by corrections. If the lawyer or the physician or the minister is taken into confidence and our program is explained to him, he also may be of effective service indirectly and even at a distance. In fact, we should engage as many men and women in the development of the plan as the plan itself requires. Now and then we may discover that some person we have called into cooperation may know the one way in which to influence and to convince the couple under care. But in enlisting the cooperation of others we must be cautious not to introduce into the plan of treatment any individual who is personally unacceptable to the couple we are serving or whose participation would be resented. And, above all, we must do nothing that would violate the confidential relationship between our clients and ourselves.

Finally, if we establish cooperation with the agencies that have been interested or that should be called into action in the case, we may invoke an instrument of service that will exercise unexpected pressure and successful control. The school, the church, the welfare society may possess confidence and power that no one else enjoys. We frequently find, for example, not only that the teacher or principal knows the child and the family but that both the child and the family recognize the authority that is vested in the school. The school stands as a symbol of the State and is not easily ignored. The minister, the priest, the rabbi often can be of greater service because of the position they hold in the community and the institution they represent. Men and women as a rule have a deep respect for religion and religious organization because they understand that clergymen not only are disinterested but are concerned primarily with assisting men and women to save them-

selves. The social workers associated with welfare organizations also exert an influence that is not always appreciated. Within the last generation men and women have come to accept the social worker as one especially trained in social problems and therefore as one who speaks and acts with authority. Cooperation, in other words, means working with every individual and with every agency that can help us in the solution of our problem, and especially with those individuals and agencies who because of their special training and experience are expert and possessed of authority.

If we learn how to employ these principles both in planning a course of treatment and in executing the program of care itself, we shall avoid many mistakes that lead to disappointment and failure in counseling and family guidance. We must have a plan of treatment; this plan of treatment must be flexible; it must include all the factors that are involved in the case; it must recognize the differences that we discover between people; it must call into action the native and inward powers of men and women; and it must enlist the cooperation of all those who can be of service. But even when we employ these principles as guides, we may not succeed in every case, and we may not be completely successful in any one case. We may know what is wrong, but we may not be able to eliminate and end the cause of distress. Diagnosis is always far in advance of methods of treatment. Doctors knew how to diagnose pneumonia and syphilis long before they knew how to treat and cure these diseases. Doctors today know much more about the diagnosis of cancer than they do about its treatment, though here they are making encouraging progress. Economists are often able to diagnose social ills, but they are not always able to treat and cure the ills they diagnose.

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The same thing is true in marriage and family counseling. We may know the source of the trouble, our diagnosis may be correct and complete, but we may not know how to solve the problem. In truth, with our present knowledge and present techniques and present facilities we cannot hope to treat every case of marital distress and family discord with equal success. We must recognize, as doctors do, that some cases are curable, that some cases are chronic, and that some cases as far as we can see are utterly hopeless. We must not deceive ourselves, and we certainly must not deceive those who come to us for counsel and guidance. It is only fair to say to a man or woman, "I know the source of your trouble, but I am afraid that the condition has now become chronic and that we can do little more than mitigate your suffering." Or "I know the cause of your unhappiness; this is perfectly clear to me. But the condition is such that I fear nothing can be done at this stage. There is no basis on which you can rebuild your marriage and family life." In other words, we are compelled in this field of service to acknowledge the tragic fact that treatment is limited, that there are some problems for which there is no solution. Men and women must not expect us to do the impossible, to make bricks without straw, to make a silken purse out of a sow's ear, to build a marble temple out of mud and clay.

## CHAPTER 13

### SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF SOCIAL TREATMENT

The scope and purpose of social treatment that we accept derive in part from the social philosophy in which we believe but more from the social program that we daily translate into social practice. If we believe in the principle of competition, we shall adopt one program of social treatment; if we believe in the cooperative principle of social organization, we shall proceed with another plan of social treatment. If we believe in private profit as the motive that moves men to action, we shall plan out one program for those who come to consult us; if instead we believe in the service motive as adequate and sufficient, we shall plan out another. If we believe in materialistic and economic determinism, we shall proceed in one way; if we believe in a system of social ethics, we shall proceed in another. Our social philosophy, however, may be vague and general and only distantly related to our practice. Many men and women believe in democracy as a matter of principle, but in practice they are dictators within their own sphere of activity. Many men and women believe in the sacredness of the human personality as a matter of principle, but in practice they are ready to subordinate and even to sacrifice the individual to the interests of the State. These concepts and practices undoubtedly determine the degree to which we are willing to assist people in distress and the manner in which we operate.

Charity, Philanthropy, Social Work, Community Service, Social Security, Social Justice—all these terms

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have come into common use in the course of the years. They do not, however, mean the same thing. Each term possesses its own peculiar content, represents a different attitude, and indicates a new stage of development in social thought. The term Charity was generally employed forty or fifty years ago to describe the program of work of social agencies such as the Charity Organization Society, the United Hebrew Charities, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The word comes from the Greek and originally meant grace or favor, the grace or favor possessed by a person or bestowed by one person upon someone else. In time the word lost its original meaning and religious connotation and came to mean little more than aid or relief given to those in need. The spirit in which the aid or relief was given, it was unfortunately assumed, was not one of personal interest and graciousness but one of condescension and disapproval. This interpretation of Charity, whatever its cause, brought the entire program of charitable organizations into disfavor and disrepute. It awakened in men and women not a sense of gratitude but a feeling of resentment. This feeling was expressed in the oft-repeated statement, "We do not want to be an object of charity." It is not surprising that welfare organizations have through a change of name endeavored to escape the implications of Charity.

The term Philanthropy, literally the love of man, contains a new thought, describes a new attitude, and marks another stage in social thinking. The spirit of Philanthropy is the spirit of fellowship and brotherhood, and the meaning of both the word and the program of work is deepened and broadened in accordance with this new concept. It is significant that the first title of the school established by the Charity Organization Society for the training of men and women was called the New York



School of Philanthropy. Men and women entered this school to learn how to serve their fellow men in distress on the level of Philanthropy and brotherhood. The term Social Work introduced another idea, the idea of scientific and professional training in the field of social service. The School of Philanthropy became the School of Social Work, and the National Conference of Charities and Corrections became the National Conference of Social Work. Social Work, in other words, implies a body of knowledge, a set of principles, a group of techniques that are as scientific and as valid as the knowledge, the principles, and the techniques of any other profession such as law, medicine, or pedagogy. Social Work means that a new profession has developed within the last generation and that the members of this profession have established themselves as an expert and authoritative group in local, state, and national life.

The term Community Service expands the program still further. It implies and indicates that the welfare organization is concerned not only with individuals and families but with groups and with the problems of the community as a whole. The Charity Organization Society and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor have recently merged and reorganized themselves into the Community Service of New York. This title means more than a change in name. It means a change in social outlook and in social function. The organization is interested in social conditions and community problems as well as in personal and family service. The departments and activities of this organization now include under family service: home economics, a bureau for men and boys, vocational guidance, and employment service; and, in addition, a department of educational nursing, medical and dental clinics, a mental hygiene clinic, a nutrition bureau, a committee on hous-

ing, and a committee on youth and justice. The most significant development in this field, however, is the Welfare Council of New York, which is city-wide. This organization is engaged chiefly in coordinating the work of social agencies and in planning out programs of service on a community basis. The leaders in social work through the Welfare Council think and act in terms of community needs, community agencies, and community programs. To think and act in terms of community service and community progress marks an important stage in the advancement of welfare programs.

The term Social Security carries us still further. Social Security means that men and women must be protected and insured against the hazards over which they have no control, that is, sickness, accidents, old age, unemployment; and it means that this insurance and protection must be provided by society itself through governmental agencies and programs. This concept that it is the duty of the Government to maintain a program of Social Security and that men and women are as a matter of right entitled to protection and security in time of need measures the distance we have traveled from the day when the Government did nothing more than to maintain an almshouse and an asylum. We have come to see that great masses of men and women are unable to set aside from current income sufficient funds to maintain them during the periods when they are unable to work. But more important than this, our sense of social responsibility has developed to the point where we recognize that the first duty of the State is to safeguard its citizens in time of need as well as in time of danger. The Beveridge plan that is being formulated for England and the new Wagner plan that is being organized for the United States embody this important concept. Men and women who suffer from disabilities against which they cannot

protect themselves will be granted allowances under these plans not as a charity but as a right. Social Security means that the citizen must be made economically secure by society itself.

The term Social Justice is the fullest and richest term of all that we employ. It throbs with protest against social evils and social injustices. Wherever men and women are exploited and suppressed and persecuted, the spirit of Social Justice rises up to demand redress and redemption. This is the spirit that has glowed in the hearts of the social prophets of every age, ancient, medieval, and modern; and this certainly is the spirit that burned at white heat in the heart of Jane Addams and the associates of her generation. These men and women who ushered in the twentieth century understood the inner meaning of charity and philanthropy and social work, they understood thoroughly the implications of community service and social security. But in addition to all this they were leaders in every crusade against social injustices. Child labor that robbed children of their childhood; overwork and low income that stunted the manhood and womanhood of the nation; the maldistribution of wealth and the exploitation of natural resources for the enrichment of the few; racial discrimination, religious prejudice, national intolerance that denied democratic ideals; international intrigue and the disaster of war—these were some of the evils against which the leaders of the last generation organized social movements and aroused the social conscience of the people. The social passion that impelled these men and women to action is the passion that must move everyone who is concerned with social progress. For Social Justice is the fundamental principle in accordance with which society must organize itself if social evils are to be ended.

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The best in all these concepts, attitudes, and stages of social thinking must enter into social treatment today. The highest point attained in the social philosophy of a democratic organization must determine the scope and the purpose of social care, whether this care be of individuals, families, communities, or nations. If we achieve this development within ourselves, we shall recognize that social care and social treatment have a threefold purpose and that the first step undoubtedly is to *relieve*. When men and women come to us agitated, confused, and bewildered, when they come to us discouraged, depressed, and even in despair, it is necessary first of all to do what we can to relieve their distress, just as it is necessary for the doctor to do what he can at the outset to relieve the pain of his patient. We must realize that as a rule men and women do not come to us until their own resources are exhausted and that what occurred prior to the consultation was but the climax of a long series of unhappy experiences and disturbing conflicts. "I am sorry to trouble you with my problem, but I must have help. This trouble in our family, this dissension between my husband and myself, has brought me to the end of my endurance. I have tried every means of which I know, but everything has failed. Now I must come to you." This statement of one woman is typical to some degree of all who come to us.

But relief, if it is to be humane and effective, should be immediate. If people are in pain, they cannot wait; if they are hungry, they must be fed; if they are about to be evicted, their rent must be paid. If they are excited and desperate, they must be calmed and soothed. If they are, as some are, on the verge of suicide, they must be saved and at once. It is true that we must know all the facts, that we cannot wisely plan a course of treat-

ment without a diagnosis, and that we cannot reach a diagnosis without assembling the evidence. In every case of urgent need, however, certainly in every emergency, relief that is immediate must be regarded as a legitimate part of the plan of treatment. Indeed, the amateur in first aid knows that the first thing to do is to quiet the patient, to ease the anguish, to stop the bleeding, even before we know the cause of trouble. This service is elementary and cannot be postponed. Not infrequently a man or woman will telephone and beg for an immediate appointment. It is not always easy to arrange for an unscheduled interview, but it is always unwise not to accede to an urgent request. It is not possible from a telephone communication to tell how urgent the need is. One worker answered, "It is too late to discuss your problem today. I wish you would come to see me tomorrow morning." When the morning came, the woman was dead.

And yet we often postpone action when action is not only needed but when it is urgent. This is due at times to a genuine desire on our part to investigate further. We may feel unsure of the person who comes to us; we may suspect that he or she is not telling the whole truth, that the man or woman is concealing much of what we ought to know. This experience occurs again and again. But in all cases it seems wiser to risk relief rather than to risk further and needless suffering. After all, what we risk in relief is money, time, and strength. These cannot compare with the misery men and women may experience as a result of our own hesitation to act with speed. Sometimes our reluctance to act at once may be due to something else, to our failure to realize the true nature of the case and the grievous character of the emergency. Many men and women do not like to tell us how very great their need is, nor do they like to expose the desperate

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position in which they find themselves. This is altogether natural in men and women who are reticent and shy. But if we are sensitive, as sensitive to suffering as we should be, we shall discover the urgency of the need in the very tone of their voice, in the expression on their face, in the very way in which they enter the room and sit in the chair. These evidences of need must not escape us.

Sometimes our desire to postpone action is due to nothing more than the fact that we are overcrowded with work and that we are a little weary from the many interviews. This may account for our apparent apathy and may explain our seeming indifference. But it does not excuse postponement. If we are tired and exhausted from wrestling with too many problems, if we are nervous and irritable as the result of listening to too many men and women, if we are ourselves distracted and disturbed by seeing so much suffering, the wise and proper thing is to ask the men and women who come to see us to wait a little while. It does not take long for those of us who understand the art of relaxation to recover our poise and patience and powers. Five or ten minutes of quiet and complete physical and mental rest will restore us to our accustomed condition and renew our strength. It will also aid us if we keep in mind the fact that every case that comes to us is a challenge, that old problems may come in a new guise, and that new problems may appear to test our understanding and insight and ability. This very mood of anticipation from interview to interview is in itself a stimulus to constant and continuous exploration. We never know when a new star may swim into our ken.

Relief should be not only immediate; it should also be adequate. There is no social wisdom in giving two drops of medicine when a teaspoonful is needed; there is no

wisdom in giving a dollar when five are necessary; there is no wisdom in giving ten minutes of time when an hour is required; nor is there any wisdom in giving only a part of our mind to a problem when the problem demands complete and concentrated thought. All this is evident and obvious. And still most relief today is inadequate, even on the level of money. This is due in most organizations not to a failure to recognize the measure of the need but to a limitation of funds. For most organizations today, both public and private, prepare careful budgets to cover their cases. Fifty years ago these budgets included only the elementary items needed for a subsistence level of living, that is, the items of food, shelter, and clothing. Today the budgets include these and other items as well that we realize are necessary for a normal life, such as carfares, recreation, medical and dental service, where no public agencies exist. Unfortunately, however, neither private nor public welfare organizations possess the funds with which to cover the budgets that they prepare. The result is that treatment is seldom more than 50 to 75 per cent adequate.

These organizations also know that the amount allowed in the budget for each item cannot be the same in every case. Conditions in one family may require more for certain items than conditions in another family even of the same size. If, for example, two members of a family of six have diabetes, it is necessary to make a special allowance for the food of the diabetics and also in some cases for insulin treatment. If the father of a family has a cardiac condition, it is necessary to take this into account in fixing the item of rent. The man must live in an apartment that will place the least amount of strain upon his heart. If the mother of the family is anaemic and on the verge of invalidism, it is necessary in such a case to make some allowance for a housekeeper who will be able to

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relieve her of the heavy drudgery in the household. A ward bed in a city hospital may be adequate for one type of person but utterly inadequate for another person with the same disease. It is therefore necessary for those who are responsible for the collection and distribution of funds to realize not only that it is unwise social policy to allow less money than is adequate but that it is always unjust and often inhumane.

The same thing is true of time. Some men and women do not recognize the value of time any more than others recognize the value of money. They sit and talk and talk, and they often talk about things that are utterly trivial and irrelevant. These men and women need to be taught the value and the importance of time. This is a part of any program of treatment. But there are many other men and women who actually need more time than we seem to be willing to give. It takes time for them to tell their story, and it takes time to calm and to soothe them in the initial stages of their distress. The trouble is that most of us are so overcrowded with appointments and work that we are constantly in a hurry, in a hurry to end the examination or the interview in order to see the next patient or client. We must understand that the question is not how long it will take to find out what is the matter and to determine the treatment. It may take a good physician only fifteen minutes to make an examination, to reach a diagnosis, and to write out a prescription; but the patient may need ten minutes more for advice and encouragement. This also is a part of the program of treatment. The time that a person needs must be measured by the need itself.

The attention that we give the man or woman who comes to consult us must also be adequate. We cannot in marriage and counseling service divide our interest and our thought in the presence of people. We must listen



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not only with our ears; we must listen with our whole mind. Unless we do, important evidence may escape us. Sometimes people speak in a voice that is almost inaudible; sometimes they speak in disjointed and almost incoherent sentences; sometimes they seem to be speaking to themselves and not to us at all; sometimes they leave unsaid the things that mean most. In all these and in other cases it is necessary for us to focus our undivided thought upon the person and what he is saying and doing. We must even be able to read between the lines, to hear the things that are left unsaid, to sense what lies below the surface of this life. It is also important to remember that men and women want to feel that they are our chief and sole concern, that at least for the time that they spend with us we are giving them the whole of ourselves and not a minor part. The truth is they are quick to discover from our own manner and responses whether or not we are fully cooperating with them. Our interview and our consultation work end in dissatisfaction and futility if the man or woman leaves us with the feeling, "He was not listening to me; he was constantly thinking of something else."

In addition to being immediate and adequate, relief must be expert and authoritative. This does not mean that we must act without sympathy and without sentiment, as some workers seem to assume. Some workers seem to believe that any expression of feeling would be a sign of weakness and that any evidence of warmth would be an indication of lack of scientific training and professional experience. They therefore endeavor to eliminate from their manner and even from their make-up all emotional elements for fear that emotion will condition their conduct and color their judgment. Their thinking, they insist, must be thoroughly scientific, or unaffected by sympathy, and their action must be utterly

impartial, or untouched by sentiment. These workers confuse sentiment with sentimentality and sympathy with uncontrolled and uninstructed emotionalism. The truth is that sympathy is an important part of our psychical constitution and sentiment is an indispensable element in every fully developed personality. These feelings are not inconsistent with scientific training and expert procedure. On the contrary, we discover that the greatest scientists are indeed rich in sentiment and expansive in their sympathies. They are great men as well as great scientists.

What we mean by being intelligent and expert is simply this, that in our work with men and women we be guided by the best knowledge that has been accumulated and that we act with the highest skill we can acquire. To know just what to do requires, however, not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience; to know exactly how to do it demands not only technical theory but patiently mastered technique. No matter how gifted we may be, no matter how great our interest in our field of work, we still need instruction and practice and discipline. A man may possess genuine musical talent, but he still requires study and training and long practice in order to become a musician. A man may possess undoubted artistic ability, but he still requires instruction and guidance and long and patient apprenticeship in order to become an artist. We must not forget that in this first stage of our work that we call relief we often come face to face with emergencies, emergencies that call for immediate action. These are especially the times when we must be expert and act with authority. A mistake in an emergency may mean failure and disaster, failure on our part, and disaster for those we assume to serve.

Men and women undoubtedly want us to be understanding and sympathetic, but they also want to feel

that we know our subject thoroughly and that we speak and act with authority. "He realized that I was in great distress, and he knew at once just what to do and exactly how to do it." This comment of a woman to a friend after an hour's consultation expressed the matter accurately. The articles that we write, the books that we publish, the position we hold in the community, especially in the field of medicine, the ministry, and law, may establish our authority in the eyes of the public. But when men and women come to us with their problems, and when these problems are complicated and difficult of solution, they are quick to discover whether we are competent to counsel and guide them or whether we are mere amateurs in the field. An easy vocabulary, a soothing voice, even an imposing presence and a well-cultivated bedside manner are not sufficient in these days. In spite of radio charlatans who exploit the misery of men and women in the presence of the public, in spite of their snapshot diagnoses and ingenious formulations of treatment, intelligent men and women cannot be deluded and deceived. They will be quick to give us their confidence and their cooperation if they discover that we are competent, that we understand how to diagnose distress and how to treat their trouble.

The next step in social treatment is to *rebuild*, to rebuild those who have broken down. This process of rebuilding means more than to rehabilitate and to re-establish. These words are too general and too indefinite. Specifically and concretely, rebuilding means chiefly two things. The first thing it means is the rebuilding of men and women physically. Men and women run down; they lose their strength, their vitality, their resistance. They are therefore unable to cope with the problems they meet. This decline in the physical life of men and women may extend over a long period of weeks or months or even

years. It may be due to disease, to days and nights of fever and pain that weaken even the strong, or to some virulent infection that destroys the corpuscles and the tissues of the body. It may also be due to prolonged undernourishment or malnutrition. Not only babies and children but adolescents and adults suffer impoverishment of the body in periods of unemployment and destitution and in lands devastated by war and famine and flood. The children born in European countries during and after the First World War still show the lack of sufficient food and of food that contained the necessary nutritive values. From this lack they were only beginning to recover when the Second World War overwhelmed Europe.

Rebuilding the body, however, is only a part of the rebuilding process. Men and women need to be rebuilt on the inside as well as on the outside. In fact, in many cases the inside is far more important than the outside, the psychical condition far more significant than the physical. In some cases the inward life of men and women is as much undernourished and is just as impoverished as the body. Men and women who are accustomed to read and to study, to improve themselves through education and cultural activities, to enjoy music and art, are sometimes compelled to suspend altogether their accustomed way of life. Sometimes this comes as the result of the pressure of personal or family problems. Sometimes it comes through a program of oppression and persecution and exile. They are, in other words, compelled to surrender all the activities that they enjoy and that they hold precious, and instead they must devote themselves to the single primary task of survival and mere existence. When the pressure relaxes and social conditions improve, they feel deeply a sense of their own inadequacies and emptiness. This is especially true of the

more intelligent and the highly cultivated. The only way in which we can meet the needs of this group is through an organized program of education and development that will rebuild their inward life and make it again satisfying and self-sufficient.

This rebuilding of the physical life may require an increase in nourishing food; it may require a long period of rest; it may require abundant fresh air and the healing power of the sun. No miracles can take place in this rebuilding process; even an ordinary convalescence takes a reasonable length of time. But we do know that we can accomplish much more now than we thought possible some years ago; that is, we can accomplish more if we possess the necessary resources. In the first place, it is necessary to inform men and women about nutrition; to instruct them in the matter of the food they need and the kinds of food that contain the calories and the vitamins and the minerals and other substances that are necessary to nourish the body properly. This process of instruction in itself requires time and training and experience on the part of the instructor. In all cases where the rebuilding of the body is necessary it is wise to enlist the cooperation of an expert in nutrition. In the second place, these people must have funds in order to purchase the food that is recommended or prescribed. This means that we must be prepared through some agency to assist men and women not only with information and instruction and guidance but also with funds if they lack funds of their own.

Fresh air and sunshine, we say, are free; but they are free only to those who are so situated that they can enjoy them. Rest, we often say, costs nothing. But it does cost wage earners and working people whatever they lose in work and wages. It is stupid to tell a man that he must take a rest when he knows that his family requires every dollar he can possibly earn; and it is just as stupid to tell

a woman that she must take a rest when she knows that she must take care of her children, her husband, and her home. If we want these people to rest, we must make proper provision for their needs. We must also keep in mind the fact that the home is not always the proper place in which to rest. The tension under which men and women live today, the strain of our occupational life and social environment, is so great in urban and especially in industrial communities that the only possibility of rest is in some rural section or some retreat that is free of the strain and tension under which city dwellers constantly live. In many cases nothing but relief from the pressure and stimuli of daily life, the radio, the newspaper, the subway, the trolley car, and all other irritating conveniences of modern culture will give men and women the rest that they actually require. For this purpose funds are necessary also. In other words, funds must be included in every program of care.

Sometimes the inward life of men and women is weakened and consumed by concern and worry and fear. It may be that their concern is about little things; it may be that their worry is over unimportant matters and that their fears are vague and even arise out of unrealities. Whatever the nature of the concern and worry and fears these men and women not figuratively but actually lower their state of resistance. Not only do they unfit themselves to wrestle with the larger problems of life, but they open themselves to invasion of every form of infection. The result is that they disintegrate both inwardly and outwardly. In planning out a program of treatment for these men and women it is necessary to distinguish between the simple cases that come to us and the more difficult cases that should be referred to a psychiatrist. It is often possible through a study of causes, an analysis of psychical states, to teach men and women the futility

and damaging effect of their mental mode of life. If their concern really is over little things, it is possible to teach them a sense of perspective; if their worry is about matters that are unimportant, it is possible to train them to see things in proper proportion. If their fears are unreal, it is possible to relate them more directly to reality. If, however, the cases do not yield to this method of treatment, the men and women must be referred to a psychiatrist who may be able to correct the difficulties in their psychical constitution.

Some men and women come to us in sorrow. The loss of a loved one is a common and universal human experience. Whether the loss comes through estrangement and divorce or through sickness, accident, and death, it means shadow and darkness and grief; and men and women may and undoubtedly do grieve themselves into a state of inward and outward weakness and danger. It is not always easy to bring these men and women solace and sustainment, for there are losses for which there is no compensation. But if we search diligently, we may discover that there are some things that will comfort and console and save them in their distress. For one thing, there are as a rule others who need to be served and through whose service salvation can come. Even in the midst of our deepest grief we dare not be so selfish as to forget those who surround us and who still need assistance and support. In addition to this, it is helpful to remind men and women that nothing can change the years that they enjoyed in comradeship with a loved one. Not even death itself can mar the texture of the life that we lived with each other or undo its beauty. In these changeless years men and women can and do find comfort and courage to face life anew.

Other men and women who come to us are discouraged and desperate and even in a state of despair. They have

suffered one disappointment and failure after another. No effort they make seems to succeed. In time they lose confidence not only in others but, what is worse, even in themselves and in their own ability. It is very often difficult to give these men and women new heart and new hope, but if we study all the circumstances of their life carefully enough, we may discover ways in which to rebuild their courage and to strengthen them to make another attempt to face life bravely and even boldly. Men and women often fail because they are untrained or inadequately equipped. To assist them to retrain themselves and to reequip themselves for more competent and efficient service is one form of treatment. Some men and women fail because their ambition outruns their abilities. To aid them to understand their own limitations and to formulate objectives in life within the scope of their own powers is also a form of treatment. Some men and women, it is clear, fail for the simple reason that they have not found the field in which they can employ their own peculiar talents. To assist men and women to a post in which they will be able to do the very things that they are endowed to do is a service not only to them but to the organization or group with which they are associated. This also is a form of treatment.

There are, too, men and women who lose interest in everything, interest in their work, in their appearance, in themselves, and in those near to them, interest even in life itself. Sometimes doctors find themselves baffled not because they do not know the source of the trouble and the correct treatment but because the patient seems to lack all interest in getting well. Dr. Richard Cabot, as great a man as a physician, once told us that in every case of sickness there are two elements: one, the disease itself, and, two, the patient's attitude. Then he added, "The attitude is often far more difficult to treat than the



disease." It is hard to reawaken in these men and women a new interest in life, for life as they know it seems to have lost its meaning. It is of no avail in these cases to appeal to the old aims and the old objectives, for they no longer have the same value and the same power. The only possibility lies in finding new aims and new objectives that will stimulate interest and life activity. This form of treatment requires insight and skill of the highest order. Sometimes it is possible to arouse people through a demand for action. There are battles to be fought, and the battles must be won. We can and do forget ourselves when we are challenged by a great cause.

Now and then we meet men and women who not only lose interest in life; they lose faith, faith in the principles that they once held valid, faith in the ideals they once cherished, faith in the goodness and the righteousness of men, and worst of all, faith in the moral order of the world. This is not an infrequent experience, especially in days of national confusion and international chaos. The success of the unscrupulous and the wicked, the triumph of evil, is often so great as to shake faith to the very foundations. But it is utterly impossible for us to rekindle faith in others unless we ourselves have faith. Unless we ourselves have outgrown moral skepticism and ethical atheism, unless we ourselves have achieved deep conviction, unfaltering faith, supreme trust in the invincibility of the moral law, we cannot hope to set the souls of others aglow. We ourselves must believe that the wicked grow as the grass only in order to be cut down forever, that evil must die of its own poison. We ourselves must be of that chosen band who

Never doubted clouds would break,  
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,  
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
 Sleep to wake.

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The work of rebuilding men and women, we must recognize, is often limited. Some men and women reach so low a level of resistance, some are so completely disorganized, some suffer such deep disintegration that little if anything can be done. In many cases it is simply impossible to restore a person to what he was at his best. The longer the period of decline the less hope there is of complete recovery and full restoration. We must recognize this fact and not expect to accomplish the impossible. Some men and women never recover altogether from a deep disappointment, the shattering experience of loss, just as some never recover from the corrosion that is the result of evil habits and the corruption of spirit that follows upon vicious forms of conduct. It is, however, a part of the plan and the purpose of treatment to aid these men and women to understand and to adjust themselves to these new limitations. "Yes, it is true that you can never be whole again. You can never work the same number of hours, you cannot engage in the same occupation, you cannot do what you once did. You cannot hope to enjoy the same happy relationships in life, nor can you expect the glory of the same achievements. It is wiser to recognize the facts and to accept your limitations. To rebel will only embitter your days and make life doubly difficult."

The third step in social treatment is to *remove*, to remove the cause of the trouble. This is the stage of work in which most of us are deeply interested and that we are eager to undertake. For we realize that, while it is necessary to relieve distress and important to rebuild those who have broken down, the fundamental part of the program, the highest purpose of all forms of social service, is to remove those conditions that cause misery and suffering. It is necessary to relieve the pain and anxiety of a man with tuberculosis; and it is important to rebuild

the health and hope of this man; but all this effort is wasted if we allow the man to return to the same unsanitary tenement house and the same dangerous factory conditions that induced the case of tuberculosis. It is necessary to relieve the strain and fear in a family that is on the verge of collapse as the result of personal misunderstanding and bitter conflicts; and it is important to assist the members of the family to rebuild their family relationships and their life together. But all this work will be of no avail unless we succeed in changing their attitude toward each other; unless we remove the cause of trouble, there is always the danger of relapse. In addition to this there is also the danger of a sense of frustration and futility in our own hearts; and this also is a serious matter.

We must recognize, however, that there are some cases in which we cannot remove the cause of distress in whole or even in part. With our present knowledge and experience and skill we can do little more in these cases than improve conditions; we cannot always prevent a relapse. If a boy's delinquency is due to bad associations, to membership in a gang in the district, we can move the boy to a new environment and so remove the cause of trouble in this particular case. If the delinquency is due to lack of proper guardianship and guidance, which in turn is due to the absence of the father or the inability of the mother to control the boy, we can provide substitutes in the form of teachers, club leaders, and big brothers. But if the delinquency is due to a defect within the boy himself, we must recognize this fact. It may be possible to curb or even to correct the trend toward delinquency imbedded in the psychological constitution of the boy. On the other hand, it may not. In spite of everything that we can do, the boy may continue to relapse. It is just as impossible to remove the cause of the trouble

in a case of this character as it is to remove the cause of trouble in a case of a malformed heart or defective brain. The only thing we can do is to place the boy in some institution in which he will have constant supervision and where he will do the least amount of damage to himself and to society.

The same thing is true of families. There are some families in which the cause of distress can be removed and some in which it cannot. If the distress is due to the fact that a civil ceremony has been performed and a religious service has not been held, the cause of trouble can be removed by arranging for a religious service. If the cause of distress is due to ignorance of biological facts, to a misunderstanding of the functions of the body and the organs of reproduction, it is not difficult to instruct man and woman and to give them the knowledge that they should possess. If the distress is due to a disagreement in regard to the standards of life, it is quite possible to change the standards of one or the other or both persons and establish the right relationship. If the estrangement of the husband and the wife is due to unwise and unwarranted interference of other relatives, these other relatives can be cautioned and urged to withdraw from the scene. This will remove the cause of the trouble and leave the couple free to build up their life together unhampered by alien influences. If the separation is a result of a violation of moral standards, it is often possible to convert the man or woman to the standards that should be maintained in marriage today and in this way remove the cause of the trouble. In all these cases there is hope of reconstructing the marriage and rebuilding family life.

But if the discord and the dissension grow out of deep-seated causes, it may be utterly impossible to remove the cause itself. If, for example, the marriage contract is in

itself invalid, because of fraud or defiance of the law of the state, there is nothing that can be done. Many women suffer because of legal deceptions of men. If the distress goes down to a taint that runs through members of the family, such as mental defectiveness, epilepsy, or insanity, there is no hope of a permanent solution of the problem. If the husband and wife are temperamentally unsuited to each other, if they have no interests in common, no basis on which to build up a comradeship, it is a part of wisdom to recognize this fact and to say frankly, "There is no foundation on which it is possible to rebuild your married life." If the wife is sensitive and religious and thoroughly ethical and the husband is crude and irreverent and utterly contemptuous of moral standards, there is no way in which the cause of trouble can be removed. These families either must disband or must continue to live with each other at best in a state of intermittent hostility and unrelieved unhappiness. We are compelled to recognize at times the cold and terrible truth that love is dead.

What is true of individuals and families is likewise true of homes and neighborhoods. Some homes can be improved, cleaned out, and refurnished; and some neighborhoods can be changed, streets can be paved, and recreation centers can be opened; but there are some homes so dilapidated and some neighborhoods so completely demoralized that there is only one way to end the evil. Forty years ago I visited some of the most congested and dangerous sections of New York City in company with a man interested in social improvement. When we returned to his home on Fifth Avenue, he said, "Well, now you have seen these plague spots in our community; what is your solution?" I uttered only one word, "Dynamite!" He looked startled and just a little frightened, but in the course of the years we have come to see that there is really no other solution. The only way in which

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we can remove the cause of trouble is by destroying the homes and the neighborhoods and by erecting the right kind of homes and by rebuilding the neighborhoods. Until we recognize this fact and act in accordance therewith, these cesspools of contagion in community life will continue to breed disease and crime and other forms of social evil.

In the occupational life there are many conditions that can be changed and that can be improved. If a man is unable to earn enough to maintain himself and his family because he is untrained in any trade, it is possible to employ vocational guidance and training and placement and in this way remove the cause of distress. If the woman is working in an office as a telephone operator or is serving in a profession as a teacher and the strain of work is too great, it is not very difficult to arrange for a change of occupation and in this way to remove the cause of the trouble. But there are some cases in which it is not possible to do what is necessary. Some men and women are employed in what are known as diminishing occupations, and they are at such an age that it is impossible to train them for a new field of work. There are other men and women who in some manner enter an occupation for which they are utterly unsuited and that is altogether uncongenial. This is especially true of men and women in professional life, in law, in medicine, and in the ministry. But circumstances are such as to make it impossible for them to escape. They cannot be retrained for another profession, nor are they able to engage in any occupation that would satisfy their needs or yield them an income. Perhaps these are among the most disturbing and distressing cases that come to us. These are the misfits of life for whom there is no hope.

In the economic system, in the political order, in the international organization we face the same fact. It is possible to improve social conditions through legisla-

tion, through negotiation, conciliation, and arbitration, through diplomacy and international treaties. But there is no way in which to remove the cause of the trouble from a social organization that is itself wrongly organized, organized, that is, in accordance with the wrong principles. If the economic system is in itself unjust, the injustices of this system can be corrected only by creating a new system that is just. If the political order is immoral, if it denies to racial or religious or national groups the elementary and inalienable human rights, then immoralities can be ended only through the establishment of an order that is moral. If the international organization is unethical, if it is characterized by distrusts and treachery, the only hope lies in organizing an international life on the basis of ethics, in realizing that the economic and political and cultural international organization becomes valid and secure only to the degree that it embodies the principles of social ethics. Until we accept this fact without reservation or compromise, we shall continue to suffer relapses into panics and unemployment, into rebellions and revolutions, into wars and wastage of human life.

This is the threefold aim and purpose of social treatment: to relieve distress, to rebuild those who are broken down, and to remove the cause of the trouble. In the application and development of this formula two points must be constantly kept in mind. The first is that these three different stages of treatment need not be taken consecutively, nor need they be taken in the order named. It is not necessary first to relieve and then later to rebuild and then still later to attempt to remove the cause. These stages of treatment are not separate and distinct modes of action; they are all parts of one program of care. In some cases we may find it advisable to proceed to remove the cause of trouble before we begin to rebuild

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and even before we begin to relieve. In fact, there are some cases in which there can be no relief and no rebuilding until the cause of the trouble has been removed. In other cases it may be wise to move forward at once with the whole plan of treatment. In other words, we may discover that it is not only possible but advisable to start rebuilding the person and removing the cause of the trouble at the same time that we are relieving the distress. To act as if there must be an interval between each stage of social treatment is to misunderstand the purpose of social treatment and the methods of social care.

The second point is that this formula applies not only to individuals and families but to groups and communities and nations as well. If the Negro group in New York is in distress, as it has been undoubtedly for a generation, the first thing to do is to relieve the distress. No one acquainted with this group will maintain that the relief has been immediate, adequate, or expert. The second step is to rebuild this group inwardly and outwardly. Only a beginning of this process has been made. The Negro group is still housed in homes that are altogether uninhabitable; they still are forced into menial occupations and live on a low-income level; they are still ravaged by disease and have insufficient medical care; they still lack confidence in themselves and the spiritual power to establish themselves even in their own self-respect. The third step is to remove the cause of their trouble. It is easy to say that the Negroes are ignorant, untrained, undisciplined, unable to maintain themselves in a normal manner. But back of all this lies the real cause, namely, the racial prejudice that deprives them of equal economic opportunities, that imposes upon them political and social disabilities, that condemns them to conditions that make a normal development and a normal life impossible.



Until the rest of the population emancipates itself from racial prejudice, there can be no true emancipation of the Negro.

When the city of Galveston was overwhelmed by a tidal wave, the first step was to rush relief to the stricken citizens, and this was done without delay. The second step was to rebuild the city, and this the citizens proceeded to do as soon as they could recover from their first shock. But this was not enough; the people of Galveston decided to build a sea wall that would be high enough to protect them against another invasion of the ocean. Galveston since then has dwelt in safety. When the city of San Francisco was shattered and destroyed by earthquake and fire, the first step was to dispatch relief to the homeless and destitute citizens. This was done immediately and adequately and intelligently. The citizens soon planned out a new community and rebuilt their city. But what could they do to remove the cause? They have constructed their buildings in such a way as to withstand to a degree the earth tremor, but they can do nothing to prevent earthquakes from visiting their region. When whole areas of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys are periodically swept by floods, relief is hurried to the inhabitants; they are even aided to rebuild their homes and to reconstruct the levees. But little has thus far been done to control the rise in the rivers. Engineers know what to do, and they have even mapped out a program of prevention. Some day this program will be translated into reality and the cause removed.

In 1929 the social structure of the United States suffered a serious dislocation and near collapse. In the course of three years the army of the unemployed rose to about fifteen million men and women; more than one-third of the nation sank into a state of destitution. The need for relief became acute, relief not upon a local but upon a

national scale, and Congress at last was compelled to appropriate billions of dollars to meet this elementary need. In 1933 the President announced a program of reconstruction and reform. A number of plans were outlined and a number of programs were set in motion, all of them designed to rebuild the agricultural, industrial, commercial, and financial system of the country. Much was accomplished in the course of the years, and the people slowly recovered themselves and retrieved their faith in their own power to direct social advance. But little if anything was done to curb or control the cause or causes of the depression or social collapse. In time we came to see that a principal if not the major cause of the breakdown of the national economy was not overproduction, as we had been told in the beginning, but rather underconsumption. This underconsumption was due to the low income of the masses of people, and the low income of the masses of people was in turn due to an inequitable distribution of the income of the nation. No serious effort was or has been made to redistribute the national income in accordance with fairness and justice.

At the conclusion of this war there will be a worldwide need of relief. This need will be greater in extent and more acute than any that followed the last war. In anticipation of this need we are now creating committees and commissions to feed and shelter and clothe and otherwise care for the peoples that are being impoverished and that will survive the war. Then will come the need of rebuilding the cities and countries that are being devastated and destroyed by the war. Not only countries but whole continents will have to be rebuilt—Europe, Asia, and large sections of Africa. This will be a task of such gigantic magnitude that it will demand the wisest statesmanship in social economy as well as resources that are now incalculable in amount. In the course of a

generation or two the world will rebuild itself. But whether the world will agree to a program that will prevent further catastrophes no one can now foretell. After the last war the governments of all civilized countries agreed to establish the League of Nations. The purpose of the League of Nations was to reduce armaments and to establish peace. The World Court was organized in order to adjudicate between nations. But the governments of these nations did not honor their own agreements; they did not employ the machinery of the League and the World Court in order to maintain world peace and to end war.

Many plans are now being formulated for the postwar world. Some of these plans deal almost altogether with economic factors, such as food, trade, exchange, and tariffs. Other plans concern themselves chiefly with political problems, with geographical boundaries, national ambitions, governmental sovereignties. And a few plans limit themselves largely to cultural elements, intellectual cooperation, student and exchange professors. Only a few statesmen realize that unless the plan of international organization, whether it be cultural, political, or economic, incorporates ethical principles and ethical ideals, there is no hope of removing the cause of conflict and of war. The ancient religious teaching is true: "The work of righteousness shall be peace." In other words, righteousness, justice, and truth are the only foundations on which peace can permanently rest. Until the world agrees to reorganize itself in accordance with the principles of ethics it will be impossible to remove the causes of war. For men can dwell together in peace, men will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks only when they learn to live with each other in a spirit of trust and brotherhood.

## CHAPTER 14

### TYPES OF PROBLEM

It is very probable that the problems that come to us in the field of marriage and family counseling will fall into five general categories: the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, the ethical. In addition to these categories problems will no doubt arise that concern the structure, the organization, and the function of the family, as well as the foundations upon which the family rests. In the course of our experience, however, we shall no doubt discover that few cases can be classified simply and definitely, that is, as belonging to only one class or category. These different aspects or areas or levels of marriage and family relationships—the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical—are not separated from each other, are not sealed compartments. On the contrary, they open directly into each other, and their boundaries disappear and merge into each other, whether we think of the areas horizontally or the levels vertically. They interpenetrate each other, and what takes place in one area or on one level may lead to distress on other levels or in other areas. Maladjustment on the biological level may and frequently does lead to maladjustment upon the psychological level. Maladjustment on the legal level may and frequently does lead to maladjustment upon the ethical level. Maladjustment on the economic level may and frequently does lead to maladjustment on other levels.

## MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING

### LEGAL

The first category that we named is the legal. In all these cases in which legal questions are involved it is unwise for anyone who is not versed in Domestic Relations Law even to hazard an opinion. The great difficulty that we face in this field is that each state has its own Domestic Relations Law. In other words there are forty-eight different marriage laws in the United States. A marriage contracted in one state is not necessarily legal in another; and a marriage contracted in one country, for example, Mexico, is not necessarily regarded as valid in the United States. These facts make the law difficult enough for lawyers to understand and for the courts of jurisdiction to interpret. From year to year the state legislatures amend the Marriage Law; and from year to year new opinions are issued by the courts. Only those in closest contact with the law will be in possession of the latest necessary information; and only those who are thoroughly trained in judicial procedures and interpretation are competent to advise men and women in cases that involve legal questions. If amateurs venture an opinion in these matters, it may lead to serious complications and great suffering. It is therefore not only advisable but imperative to consult the ablest experts in the Domestic Relations Law in every case that involves a legal problem. A problem may seem simple to the uninitiated, but for the expert it may require the most thorough and careful study.

One question that may arise and that does arise, in fact, in more cases than one would at first suspect is this: Is the marriage itself legal? The Marriage Law or Domestic Relations Law of each state declares that certain marriages are null and void from the outset. New York state, for example, declares null and void incestuous marriages,

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that is, marriages between an ancestor and a descendant; a brother and a sister, of either whole or half blood; an uncle and niece or an aunt and nephew. It also declares void a marriage contracted by a person whose husband or wife by a former marriage is living unless the former marriage has been annulled or dissolved by divorce; or unless the former husband or wife has been sentenced to imprisonment for life; or unless the former husband or wife has absented himself or herself for five successive years leaving no knowledge of his or her whereabouts, the so-called Enoch Arden law. Other states differ from New York state in the conditions that they prescribe for marriage. Some states are more lenient and liberal than New York state and other states are more conservative and more rigid. The very elementary fact of age for marriage, for example, is very different from state to state. In some states, in fact, the age at which a young man or a young woman may marry with the consent of parents or guardian is still a matter of doubt or is set so low as to make it impossible for any reasonable person to agree with the law.

In one case a man came to consult me about a religious marriage service. After speaking with him for a few moments I asked, "Have you had a civil ceremony performed?" "Yes, at City Hall." "This, I assume, is your first marriage." He hesitated for a moment and then said, "No, this is my second marriage." "When did your first wife die?" "She is not dead; she is living in Brooklyn." "Then I assume that you were divorced. How long ago?" "About three years ago." I knew enough about the Divorce Law of the state to know that a man divorced in New York, if he is the guilty party, cannot remarry in New York state within five years and then only with the consent of the court. I asked the man how he had secured a license for his second marriage. "Oh," he said, "I just

did not mention my first marriage." I then consulted a lawyer associated with our work and learned that according to the law the second marriage was null and void. He and his wife were greatly disturbed as their child was to be born within two or three months. The only solution the lawyer could suggest was for the couple to move immediately to another state and to remarry under a law more lenient than the one in New York. This course of action the couple adopted at once, and in this manner they legalized their marriage and legitimized their child.

The same thing is true of the divorce laws in the United States. Each state has its own Divorce Law, and each state prescribes its own grounds for divorce action. In other words, there are forty-eight different divorce laws. South Carolina admits no ground for divorce. This means that no divorce can be secured in this state, though the state Marriage Law does provide for annulment on different grounds. New York state recognizes only one ground for divorce, that is, adultery. This law traces back to the early Colonial Period when the Canon Law of the Church of England became the Civil Law of the colony and later of the state of New York. Many efforts have been made to liberalize the Divorce Law of New York state, but no progress whatever has been made in the matter of divorce though the legislature has provided other means of dissolving the marriage bond. Other states recognize more than one ground for divorce, and some states such as Massachusetts, Ohio, and California recognize several grounds. In some states the man or woman applying for a divorce must establish a residence of at least one year. In Florida, however, legal residence is limited to ninety days, and in the state of Nevada to six weeks. In addition to this the interpretation of the Divorce Law in some states is very lenient. Mental cruelty, for example, is a ground for divorce in some states. But what constitutes

mental cruelty depends altogether upon the interpretation of the court. As a result of the recent decision of the Supreme Court a divorce granted in one state must be accepted by other states as valid. But this does not mean that a divorce granted in another country is necessarily valid in the United States.

One woman complained that she could not persuade her husband to support her child and herself. She wanted to know what legal action could be taken in order to compel the father and husband to meet what seemed to be his legal as well as his moral responsibility. Failure to support a wife and child is a ground for court action in every state, and on the basis of the presentation of the wife the claim seemed to be just and valid. The lawyer to whom this woman was referred, however, discovered to her dismay and to our surprise that she had no legal redress whatever. The records showed that her husband had been divorced from his first wife in Mexico and that he had married this woman, his second wife, also in Mexico, after having lived with her for two years in the United States without a marriage service. The Mexican divorce is not recognized as legal by the state of New York, nor is a marriage in Mexico recognized as valid. The woman therefore could not sue her husband for support in any court of jurisdiction. He could not even be arrested and prosecuted on the charge of bigamy. When he decided to desert his second wife and their child and to return to his first wife, no legal action whatever could be taken against him. It is evident from this case that women who propose to marry outside their state of residence and certainly those who propose to marry outside the United States should inquire carefully into the law and learn what would be their legal status.

Many cases that come to us involve other legal questions such as the rights and the responsibilities of the



different members of the family. In some instances the wife thinks she is being denied her legal rights and that her husband is taking advantage of the fact that she is married to him. In some instances the husband thinks the wife is not fulfilling her legal responsibilities and is ignoring her obligations to him as her husband. In other instances the parents may disregard the rights to which the children are legally entitled, and in still other instances the children may ignore their legal responsibilities to their parents. The law states the rights and the responsibilities of husband and wife and parents and children, but the interpretation and application of the law are not always simple and easy in a particular case, as judges in the Domestic Relations or Family or Probate Court well know. Some of the most complicated and distressing problems in the legal field arise in connection with property rights and especially in connection with wills and inheritances. Men and women are often unwise and not infrequently unfair in making out their wills and in disposing of their possessions. And it is also true that men and women are often avaricious and unwarranted in their claims upon property and bequests. Sometimes, in truth, it is difficult to determine whether the case is really one in law or one in ethics.

A simple case will illustrate this point. One young woman, not more than twenty-five years of age, came to see me in a state of extreme agitation. After she was seated, I asked the customary question, "What is the problem that you would like to discuss with me?" "I want to know what my rights are." "Of what rights are you speaking?" "I have been married six months and I am going to leave my husband. I want to know whether I have the right to take my furniture with me." Under the circumstances only a lawyer could determine whether the furniture belonged to her or to her husband or to

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both and whether or not she had a right to remove it. It seemed far more important to me, however, to determine first why the woman wanted to leave her husband and to move her furniture. "Tell me something of what has happened during the six months of your marriage." We discussed the problem carefully and thoroughly for over an hour. The disagreements and dissension had arisen not as a result of any essential difference between the husband and the wife but as a result of the invasion of members of both families. After reviewing all the facts fully the young woman finally agreed that the all-important thing was to preserve her marriage and that it would be much wiser not to leave her husband and to take the furniture but to leave the furniture where it was and to retake her husband. Not infrequently the case that in the beginning seems to involve a legal title to property turns out to be a matter of ethical attitudes.

## ECONOMIC

Another class of problems may be called the economic, though they more often fall into the field of home economics. The husband and father, for example, does not earn enough to maintain his wife and children. Should the wife work, and if so what should she do with the money she earns? This is a problem that young married people frequently face and some older people as well. In fact, this problem arises with older people more often than many realize. The husband and father for some reason loses his former earning capacity and is unable to earn enough to support his family. If the man cannot earn enough to maintain his family and himself, there is no valid reason why the wife should not work, especially if there be no children. In the case

of young couples this means, of course, that the young people must postpone the coming of children. This is one of the serious questions that should be carefully discussed with the couple. Some arrangement should be agreed upon in advance that will make it possible for the woman to take a maternity leave at the proper time in order to bear and to rear a child. In cases where there are children some provision must be made for the proper care of the children. In some cases it is possible to place the children with relatives; in some cases it is necessary to apply to social agencies for care and supervision. But in all cases it is most important to remember that what children need above all else is parental interest, parental affection, and parental devotion. No one has a right to rob children of what they need most, especially during the early years of life.

If the man, however, can earn enough to maintain his wife and family, should the wife work? This is a more difficult problem, and the answer will depend in large part upon the woman's inclinations, equipment, and responsibilities. If a woman has a specialized form of training, if she has a profession—law, medicine, teaching, art, there is no reason why she should not be permitted to employ her talents and to make her own contribution to both the family fund and to the general welfare. This can be advised only if it does not prevent the woman from meeting her responsibilities as wife and mother. Some women are capable of doing these things, of managing their home, of supervising their children, of serving as a comrade to the husband, and of engaging, in addition, in work outside. Others, we find, are too limited in strength and capacity to undertake outside activities. In discussing whether the wife should work, we must also not forget that some women seek work outside the home in order to escape what they regard

as the burdens and drudgery within the home. The danger, of course, is not only that the home will suffer but that family life itself will disintegrate. There is no social advantage in a woman's succeeding as a lawyer or doctor or teacher or artist and failing as wife and mother. The sense of failure as wife and mother in the end destroys all happiness in success outside the home.

What shall be done with the funds of the family? This is one of the problems that constantly arise, and it is not always easy to solve. Either the husband or the wife may complain about the possession and disposition of family funds, and even the children may protest. It is still the custom in most families for the husband and father to keep control of the funds. He earns the money, and the money therefore belongs to him, and it is his privilege to decide how much to allow the wife from week to week and how the rest is to be spent. This custom is a relic of the patriarchal form of organization in which the husband and father is in complete and absolute control of family funds and family affairs. At the present time this custom leads to many arguments and much irritation. In the first place, the wife and mother feels that she works inside the home and is now entitled to an income; and in the second place, the wife is sure that the husband and father does not understand what is needed in the home and how much the things needed cost today. "My husband insists upon deciding what I am to spend for food and clothing and house furnishing and similar items. But he has no idea whatever of the cost of these items or of their relative importance at the present time. He will not even listen when I try to tell him of the changes that are taking place in the cost of living and also the changes that are taking place in housekeeping and homemaking." This is not an uncommon complaint

and sums up what many women feel even when they fail to express it openly and frankly.

The most sensible arrangement in a democratic form of family is to place the funds in a joint account or to regard the family funds as a joint fund. The wife should know what her husband earns and what he possesses though many women actually do not have this knowledge. "I have no idea what my husband owns; he never tells me; nor do I know how much he makes." "I cannot tell my wife all these things; she has no understanding about money matters." This may be true, though it is not often so. The answer, however, is clear: If the wife does not understand about money matters, then she should be instructed, and it is the duty of her husband to assist in this process of education. It may be that the wife will prove to be a surprisingly apt pupil. This plan of a joint fund for the family assumes, of course, that the husband and wife and the children when they are old enough will sit down together to discuss the wisest way in which to expend the funds that are available. It is probable that they will agree that one claim upon the fund is an allowance for the personal needs of each individual. This is both legitimate and wise. Each member of the family wants to feel that he or she has some little fund of his or her own. They will also agree that another item is the maintenance of the home, which includes an allowance not only for rent and food and house furnishings but for other items as well. Here is where discussion develops and where difficulties may arise because the standard of one may not be the standard of the others. But in the course of time the members of the family learn through discussion to compromise and to agree upon what is best not for one but for the family as a whole.

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The simplest solution of many problems in the field of home economics lies in the proper preparation of a budget. If the husband thinks that the wife is not economical and thrifty, that she is extravagant and reckless, and if the wife thinks that the husband is uninformed and even ignorant of household affairs, then it is wise for them to be referred to a home economist who can instruct and guide them in budget making. Many organizations, including the home economics departments of colleges, have prepared budgets for different income levels, and these forms can be readily secured. The couple, of course, may not be in agreement upon all the items that should be included in the budget in addition to the elementary items of food, shelter, clothing, and medical service. "I think our children should go to a private progressive school, and my husband will not agree to this." This statement of one woman came at the end of months of discussion, and though innocent in itself it revealed a serious disagreement between the husband and the wife. The husband maintained that the family should move into a school district in which the public school itself is progressive and in this way save the cost of a private school. The wife finally agreed to try out this plan, and the school to which the children were sent proved to be so excellent in every way that the wife completely abandoned her plan for private school instruction.

More often, however, the questions arise and the quarrels develop over the amount that should be allowed for each item, that is, for rent, for food, for clothing, for medical and dental care, for recreation, and especially for services and the savings account. In many cases the problem is solved through an education of the husband in household needs and prices, and in some

cases the problem is solved through the curtailment of unwarranted demands on the part of the wife. But it must be remembered that men and women differ in the importance that they place upon the different items in a budget. A woman who thinks first of her home will be willing to spend less than the average on other things in order to have the kind of home that she wants. A man who thinks more of recreation than his wife will insist upon setting aside a larger sum than appears to his wife to be necessary and a larger sum even than the average. In addition to this it must not be forgotten that the position of the husband and the social relationships of the wife may require a larger sum than the average for clothing and cosmetics. Yet if the budget is thoughtfully and wisely prepared and carefully and properly kept, many questions as to what is and what is not spent by both husband and wife will be eliminated. And at the same time and far more important, it introduces a joint responsibility for family expenditures. This is a necessary thing to impress upon any couple, to make both the husband and the wife responsible for what is done within the home. It then becomes impossible for them to blame each other for any mistake or misadventure.

The problem may not be one of income or expenditure or even one of the budget. It may be a problem that involves training or rather lack of training in household management and experience in homemaking. "My wife seems to have no understanding whatever of what to buy or how to prepare it or how to serve it." This is a condition that may cause much discussion and discord after the glow of the honeymoon has faded. The truth is that many young women today know very little about housekeeping and homemaking. They spend their girlhood years and the years of their youth not

## TYPES OF PROBLEM

inside but outside the home, in school, in business, and in places of pleasure. The result is that when they marry, they are utterly unprepared to meet the responsibilities that naturally rest upon a woman who becomes a wife. The only solution in cases of this kind is education in home economics and practical courses in housekeeping. Fortunately, courses of this kind are now given in almost every community. There is much that young women can learn from their mothers and much that they can also learn from their friends, but they can learn more from teachers who are especially trained in the field of home economics. The difficulty often is that young women feel a dislike for housekeeping and a disinclination to make their home what it ought to be. This attitude, unfortunate as a cause of unhappiness, can be corrected through counsel and guidance.

But this training in home economics, in housekeeping and homemaking, should not be limited to the woman. The home is a joint enterprise and should be jointly managed as well as jointly maintained. If the husband and older children are trained in home economics as well as the wife, they will come to appreciate a little more clearly the part that the wife and mother plays in the home. The man leaves the home early in the morning and comes back in the evening; the older children do likewise. The result is that they do not always realize what goes into the management of the home, the planning of the meals, the purchase of the supplies, the arrangement of the furnishings, the care of the smaller children, the supervision of the servants, the constant and never-ending feeling of responsibility. "My husband and my children have no conception whatever of the burdens I carry from day to day and from week to week. They have at least a change of environment and association when they leave their work. But I am confined to our



home and home duties and home drudgery both day and night." This woman was correct in her complaint. It was true that the husband could not understand why his wife was not always ready to receive him on his return from work, neatly dressed, cheerful in manner, and affectionate in mood. A full realization of what it means to be a wife and mother and manager of the home in itself solves many a problem.

Strangely enough, it may seem to some, serious disputes arise over the servant or nurse in the household. In one family the mother insisted upon keeping a nurse for her two children. She maintained this position on the ground that the nurse was devoted to the children and that she could trust the nurse to take care of them in case illness developed during the absence of the parents. The father, on the other hand, objected to the nurse on the ground that she was slovenly, that she was nervous and irritable and unable to direct and control the children, and also on the ground that she did not carefully watch their eating habits. The mother was right in part, and the father was right in part. But both were in part wrong. In my judgment the wife made the mistake of keeping the nurse, who was a source of disagreement and disturbance between her husband and herself. She could have and should have dismissed the nurse and secured someone else who would have been just as devoted and trustworthy and who would not have possessed the disqualifications to which the husband rightly objected. It is sometimes surprising to discover how insistent, to put it frankly, how stubborn, women can become in matters of this kind. In this particular case the woman maintained that the husband should leave the home to her. She was incorrect as well as unwise because the home and the children belonged to her husband as well as to herself.

## TYPES OF PROBLEM

### BIOLOGICAL

The third class of problems may be termed the biological. These problems range from simple ignorance in matters of health to the most complicated cases of maladjustment upon the biological level. The biological conditions in marriage and family life are, in fact, so important and so frequent a cause of distress that it is as a rule advisable to have the client thoroughly examined by a competent physician to be sure there is no biological basis for the trouble. Low vitality, impairment of some organ, disease in any section of the body may play their part and mar a marriage. One woman could not meet her obligations as a wife, not because she did not love her husband but simply because she suffered with a form of anaemia that kept her in a chronic state of physical exhaustion. An unrecognized glandular disturbance may lead to irritability that both the husband and the wife may misinterpret and think is merely a matter of temperament. In one case the man was persuaded to take his wife to a physician for an examination even though he could not see the reason for this recommendation. The physician confirmed the counselor's suspicion, namely, that the woman suffered with an aggravated case of hyperthyroidism. This diagnosis changed the man's whole attitude. With this new knowledge and change of attitude it was not difficult to bring about an adjustment that meant a solution of the problem.

An undiagnosed intestinal disturbance may also lead to intermittent distress that both the man and the woman may misunderstand. The man in one case insisted that there was nothing wrong with his wife and that she was altogether too much concerned about herself and her own condition. He finally, however,

agreed to have his wife examined, and the examination by a specialist and a series of X rays revealed an intestinal ulceration that was more than sufficient to account for the woman's physical and emotional and mental distress. A child who is normal is cheerful and happy, and the same thing is true of men and women. It is therefore only reasonable to assume that when men and women are depressed and unhappy, they are not normal or in good health. In fact, so many things may be wrong on the biological level, in the physical, neurological, emotional, or mental segments of a human being, that nothing but a complete examination will serve our purpose. Sometimes conditions discovered can be corrected, sometimes they can be improved, but sometimes nothing can be done but to bear with them. It is difficult to reconcile oneself to a condition that is incurable, it is true, but men and women in marriage simply must learn to resign themselves to conditions, even when they cannot be reconciled to the unchangeable and the inevitable.

One group of cases that causes much concern includes the men and women with venereal infections. "I have contracted gonorrhea," one man confided, "and I am greatly disturbed over the situation that has developed. The doctor is treating me and assures me that in time I shall be cured. But meanwhile I do not know what to do about my wife. I cannot of course approach her, and she cannot understand my desire to sleep alone." The man confessed that he had been guilty of associations with other women, and he not only feared infecting his wife but was afraid of her reaction to what she would discover to be his misconduct. There was, of course, only one thing to do, and that was to persuade the man to confide the facts to his wife frankly. This he agreed to do with great reluctance. His wife listened patiently to

his confession. She was inwardly shocked but realized that the problem was hers as well as her husband's. Fortunately she was an intelligent and well-balanced woman and said to her husband, "The first thing we must do is to deal with this as a medical matter. You are diseased and you must be cured, not only for your sake but for my sake. After you are cured, we shall discuss your conduct." Had she allowed herself to burst into a rage, it might have wrecked the marriage completely. By keeping control of herself she succeeded in retrieving her husband and in saving her married life.

A woman in her early thirties, to cite another case, became greatly distressed over the fact that her father had just been sent to the insane asylum and that the case had been diagnosed as paresis. "I know that syphilis is hereditary and that it often does not reveal itself until middle life. When I was married, there was no law requiring a blood test, and I am concerned about my own condition. My husband does not know the facts in regard to my father, and I am afraid to tell him the truth. What do you think I should do? Should I have a blood test without my husband's knowledge, or should I tell him why I want it?" It was necessary in this case to convince the wife that no matter what the blood test would show, she was in no way to blame. She was finally convinced also that the possibility of a syphilitic infection must not be concealed, that these cases must be treated as other diseases are treated, openly and as medical problems. To her surprise her husband realized the situation at once and evaluated it correctly. He did not for a moment think of his wife as guilty in any way. In fact, his sole concern was to discover whether or not the infection had descended to her and to have her treated at once in case the blood test proved positive. Fortunately, in this case the blood

test proved negative, and both the man and woman were greatly relieved. If the woman had submitted to a blood test without her husband's knowledge, she admitted that she would always have been uneasy. It is difficult at times to draw the line between secrecy and deception.

In many instances the trouble or complaint is one of maladjustment upon the sexual level. There is no doubt that many couples not only during the early months of marriage but for many years find themselves maladjusted and that this maladjustment is an unexpressed and often secret cause of marital disturbance. Either the man or woman may be unsatisfied and unhappy but may for different reasons feel a reluctance to discuss the concealed cause of the trouble. But this condition may be easily magnified out of all proper proportion. Except in cases of abnormality it is now regarded as less important than was believed some years ago, and the solution is not as difficult as was one time thought. The maladjustment on this level may be due to simple ignorance of the anatomy and physiology of the human body; or it may be due to wrong habits acquired before or during marriage; or it may be due to nothing other than the unwillingness of the man to accommodate himself to the woman or the woman to the man. In one case, typical of many, neither the man nor the woman knew what they should have learned about the structure and functioning of the body; that is, they did not know what they should have known about each other and what every couple should learn. The result was pain and misunderstanding and conflict. Instruction by an understanding physician was all that was needed to remove the cause of distress.

Where the maladjustment is due to wrong training, wrong attitudes, or wrong habits acquired in various

ways, the solution is more difficult. One woman complained bitterly that her husband alienated her by his very manner, that he was almost brutal in his approach. The fact was that he brought to his marriage what he had learned from prostitutes and had come to expect from his wife what he had been accustomed to receive from the women he visited in houses of prostitution. This is not an uncommon cause of distress. The man in this case had to learn what every man should know, namely, that his wife expects and deserves to be treated by him with tenderness, delicacy, tact, patience—all the chivalry that a man should practice even in the most intimate relations of marriage. On the other hand, the maladjustment may be due to miseducation and misinformation on the part of the wife. A young woman who is educated to believe that marital relationships are not only immodest but unclean, that sexual desires are contaminating, and that the flesh must be subdued is in grave danger of maladjustment in her married life. The same thing is true of young women who have learned of the mistreatment of their mothers at the hands of their fathers. They are so conditioned by their mothers' mistreatment that they approach marriage in a state of dread, even actual disgust. All these attitudes due to miseducation and misinformation can and must be corrected through proper counseling and instruction.

It is seldom that two people, that a man and a woman, are matched sexually. All the studies that have been made on the basis of confidential investigation prove that it sometimes takes weeks and months for two people to achieve complete or even approximate adjustment. It is well known to every student of the subject that women as a general rule differ in important respects from men in the matter of their sex life. Women are

undoubtedly less active sexually than men and are slower to awaken and to respond. In addition to this the areas of sensation are more widely distributed. These facts should be made known to laymen and the implications accepted by every couple that marries. Unless they accept these facts and are willing to make the necessary effort to cooperate with each other, there will always be discord and distress. In truth, it is sometimes ignorance on the subject that accounts for the trouble, but more often it is the unwillingness on the part of the woman or the man or both to persevere that is the source of the difficulty. Some men complain that the wife is indifferent, cold, even frigid, when all that the woman needs is tender treatment and thoughtful cultivation in the matter of marital relations. Many husbands, it must be confessed, are too thoughtless, too impatient, and too inconsiderate to make a success of marriage on the sexual level.

Another problem that falls in this category is the problem of children and contraception. "Should we have children? I want a child but my husband is doubtful." "We have two children, a little girl and a little boy. They are both well and strong, and I am very eager to have another baby. Do you think we should undertake this?" The answers to these questions are not simple. We cannot say yes or no without carefully considering a number of important points. First, the desire of both the husband and the wife to have children. Sometimes the desire is weak, and sometimes the maternal or paternal feeling is undeveloped; sometimes the woman hesitates to embark upon the mysterious adventure of motherhood solely for selfish reasons. In these cases reeducation is the only form of solution. Second, the health of the parents, especially of the woman. Are they both in good health? Would another pregnancy weaken the woman

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and undermine her health? In some women the maternal instinct is so deep that they are willing to take risks that are most unwise. Third, the ability of the couple to rear children properly in our time. Children today require more care and a larger investment in order to survive and to develop than the last or previous generations thought necessary. The reduction in the death rate of infants and children during the last generation is undoubtedly due to a realization of this fact. All these points must be carefully discussed in considering the matter of children.

But in all cases the couple should be instructed in the proper methods of contraception. Too many men and women even after months and years of marriage rely upon the recommendations of friends and the advice of incompetent persons. They do not realize the seriousness of this subject and think that it is sufficient to follow what others have done. No layman knows enough to give counsel in contraception. For this counsel presupposes a gynecological examination of the woman who is to be instructed. Contraception, we now know, is a technique that must be scientifically studied and that requires instruction by a physician who understands the different methods that are now available and who is able to prescribe the proper method that is suitable for the particular couple that consults him. Unfortunately, not all physicians are skilled in contraceptive knowledge and procedure. The wrong method not only may fail to prevent conception but may result in serious damage. It is therefore necessary to be sure that the physician is competent. As a rule an obstetrician or gynecologist is the safest to consult. In many communities contraceptive clinics have been established where expert information and instruction may be secured. In fact, in a number of states the Department



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of Health has made contraception a part of the program of preventive medicine, and more and more this is coming to be accepted as a legal and legitimate method of maintaining the health of women.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL

A fourth class of problems is the psychological. This is the type that is most emphasized at the present time. The growth of the mental hygiene movement, the increased interest in the subject of psychology, the new emphasis upon psychiatry and psychoanalysis, their importance as diagnostic as well as therapeutic agencies all have contributed to a realization of the part that psychological factors play in marriage and family life. There is no doubt whatever that many problems in marriage and family relationships arise on this level. For marriage is not merely a union of two persons; it is a union of two personalities, and personalities are very complex entities. Impulses, emotions, mental states; interests, attitudes, outlooks; dreams, long-forgotten experiences, the whole realm of the subconscious—all these enter into and compose the psychical constitution. It is not surprising in view of the complexity of our psychical life that we suffer conflicts even within ourselves. It is still less surprising that conflicts arise between two individuals who live together in the intimate relationships of married life. Yet it would be a mistake to assign all conflicts to the psychological level, as it would be to assign all conflicts to the biological or the economic. We must therefore be careful not to be ourselves conditioned by our interest in psychical elements and the psychological atmosphere in which we now live.

One of the most common psychological causes of conflict is difference in temperament. This is evident

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from the fact that temperamental incompatibility is so frequently assigned and is actually so often a cause of separation and divorce. "My husband and I clash constantly. On the slightest provocation we begin to argue and to quarrel. It seems impossible for us to meet without an explosion. We are just not suited to each other." This was undoubtedly true in the case under discussion. The conflicts were so constant and so intense that there was no hope of adjusting these two people to each other. This is frequently the conclusion to which we must reluctantly come. But difference in temperament does not necessarily mean a dissolution of the marriage in every case. It is possible for men and women to curb and to modify their temperament. Human nature can be changed and improved. This means, of course, constant and conscientious endeavor on the part of the individual to reconstruct himself or herself. In many cases the man and woman can learn to accommodate themselves to each other in spite of their temperamental differences. This process of accommodation usually means a program of education for either one or the other or both. This reeducation takes time and effort, it is true, but the investment of both time and effort on the part of the couple and the counselor is most worth while if in this way it is possible to save the marriage and to preserve the family.

Jealousy is another element of the psychical constitution that causes much distress and that is often the secret source of unhappiness in marriage. Men and women are not always ready to admit that they are moved by jealousy and often do their utmost to disguise this feeling in various ways; to use the current term, they rationalize their real emotion. "My husband, I am sure, is jealous. He watches every move I make, every person to whom I speak, even every letter I

write. We often come home from a social gathering with my husband in a mood that is something between depression and resentment. All through the evening I was aware of his watchfulness and jealous attitude. He refuses to admit the truth, but I am sure I am right." The husband was finally persuaded to discuss his marital problem with a psychiatrist. It took many sessions, however, to uncover the actual cause of the trouble and to convince the man that he was moved fundamentally by jealousy. It took a longer time to reeducate him and to correct the condition that led to so much unhappiness. Whether jealousy is more common among women than among men may be a debatable question, but the fact is that many women grow jealous of their husbands, and this jealousy leads to suspicion. Men often complain, "My wife is altogether too suspicious of me." And the root of this suspicion we often discover to be nothing but jealousy itself.

Difference in intellectual capacity and intelligence is another grave cause of disagreement and misery. Contrary to the belief of many, women do not always marry men who are their intellectual superiors. They frequently marry men who are of limited intellectual capacity, limited range of interests, and limited associations. "My husband is not at all interested in what is happening in the world. He never reads a book, looks at only the movie magazines, and does nothing more than glance at the headlines, though he does read the sport news. When we are in company, I am constantly embarrassed by his ignorance of affairs and his utterly stupid comments upon what others say. I do not know what to do about this matter." The truth is that very little in a case of this kind can be done. The man's intellectual powers cannot be increased or his interests enlarged or his activities changed. The woman should have

discovered the limitations of her husband before she married him, but now that she is married to the man she must adjust herself to the facts, unpleasant and disturbing as they may be. In this case under discussion the man was kind, in many ways generous, certainly devoted to his children, and very fond of his wife. The woman recognized these good qualities and finally agreed that she would have to seek intellectual stimulus and companionship in circles outside her home. In other words, the solution was one of compensation on the outside for what was lacking on the inside of her married life.

Closely associated with these cases of difference in mental power and intelligence are the cases of emotional immaturity. One man who had married his wife after a brief courtship on a winter cruise later discovered to his astonishment that his wife besides being girlish in appearance was emotionally in the early adolescent stage. Wherever he went with his wife, people could not help but comment upon her conversation and her conduct. She never acted the part of a woman simply because she had never grown into womanhood. Another man complained bitterly that his wife caused him infinite uneasiness. "She acts like a child. She is just as unstable and as irresponsible as any child that I have met, and I do not seem to be able to do anything with her." The truth is that many women never attain maturity in their emotional development. Some even think that it is cute to cultivate a childlike manner, forgetting that what is childlike in a child becomes childish in a woman. In these cases of emotional immaturity, instability, and irresponsibility it is often possible to assist the woman to stabilize herself and to recognize her responsibilities. But in some cases there is nothing for the man to do but to recognize the fact that he has married an emotional moron.

Another cause of distress in the psychological area is lack of common interests or a conflict of interests. "My wife and I are not interested in the same things at all. When I talk to her about my work and my plans, she does not even listen. The time we do spend together is spent in the most trivial kind of conversation and discussion. I am really afraid that we are drifting apart." "Did you have any interests in common when you married?" "Yes, I think we did. Not serious ones, but there were some things that we liked to do together; there were some things that we shared." Of course, this man and his wife have things in common though they do not seem to realize it. They have their marriage in common, they have their home in common, they have their children in common; but these things are evidently not enough. Life is larger than all these things, and a man wants to feel that his wife is interested in the things that interest him, that occupy his mind, and that consume his energies. He wants to discuss his problems with the one person he cares about most. When the wife realized that her lack of interest in her husband's life and work was seriously affecting her marriage, she changed completely. Now there is a comradeship between the two as well as a marriage, and this could come only as a result of an earnest desire and endeavor to cultivate a community of interests.

The difference in habits, attitudes, outlooks upon life is often a cause of conflict and contention. Men and women who come from different social groups, who have different backgrounds and different forms of education, who have reached different stages of culture and development frequently find that these psychological differences are a source of distress. "My husband just does not seem to understand me. He thinks I am full of prejudices when I discuss questions with him."

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The husband was right, but the young woman could not understand it at first. What were prejudices to her husband seemed to her the natural attitudes of the group from which she came and out of which she had never altogether emerged. She had grown up in a southern community and had acquired the narrow parochial view of life and life relationships characteristic of that section of the country. One young woman found it impossible to enter into or sympathize with the religious life of her husband. He had been reared as an orthodox Jew and she as a liberal. This difference even within the same religion was a constant source of irritation and occasionally became a cause of conflict. The solution was not simple, nor was the conversion sudden. But in time both these couples came to see that their marriage was far more important than the things about which they differed. And when they realized this, they were able to make the adjustments that were necessary to save their marriage.

Intermarriages present even more serious problems. Intermarriages may of course be racial and national as well as religious; but most of the cases that come to the counselor are marriages between two people of different religious groups. "My wife is Catholic, and I am Jewish. When we married, we were deeply in love with each other and did not believe that our different religions and religious backgrounds would in any way interfere with our married life. In fact, we agreed not to discuss religion or to allow it to become a source of concern to us. We find now, however, that these differences are coming to the surface, and we are both afraid that they are building barriers between us. What can we do about this?" This is the simple statement of a sensible couple that earnestly tried to solve the problem of their intermarriage. The truth of the matter is that

it is difficult, even impossible, to outgrow one's group background, form of education, and consequent outlook on life. It is even more difficult to outgrow the prejudices that almost inevitably develop in every racial, religious, and national group. The utmost that two people can do is to agree not to irritate or antagonize each other by allowing these prejudices to express themselves. In only the rarest of cases is it possible for a man and woman born and reared in different groups to achieve oneness of understanding and sympathy of action. Almost every couple that engage in intermarriage must recognize these facts and learn to accommodate themselves to each other. While they cannot establish complete oneness in married life, they can work together and share each other's life at every other point if they learn to trust each other and continue to respect and to regard each other with affection.

In addition to these cases due to differences in temperament, interests, attitudes, there is a large group of cases that suffer distress for less obvious if not for deeper reasons. Childhood experiences, adolescent attachments, misconceptions concerning courtship and marriage and family relationships, unhappy home environment, distorted or perverted notions not only about sex but about many other matters, subconscious fears and unhealed psychological wounds—all these conditions must be considered when other causes are eliminated. These conditions, however, take us into the field of psychiatry and psychoanalysis, and in this field only the most expert are competent to serve. These deep-lying causes of trouble are like internal abscesses. They require the most skillful surgical treatment. Unless the surgeon is exceedingly skillful, there is grave danger. Instead of opening and draining the abscess he may distribute the poison and induce septicaemia. The same thing is

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true in these psychical cases. There is always the danger of poisoning the whole system. These cases therefore must be placed at once in the hands of the ablest men or women in the field. The treatment means not only the discovery and draining of the abscess; it means a reorganization of the inner life, and this takes time and demands a knowledge of the psychical constitution and a technique that only the few possess.

In the case of one couple the wife complained that her husband was almost always irritable and flew into rages that seemed to have no explanation. "I cannot understand what is the trouble with my husband. He is always unhappy, and everything that I do and say seems to irritate him. When I least expect it, he explodes in a passionate outburst. I do not know whether this is just temper or something else." A very brief interview with the man convinced the counselor that the man ought to see a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist discovered that the man's psychical life was filled with distortions and that he was manifesting incipient symptoms of manic-depressive insanity of the manic type. The history that was uncovered disclosed the fact that this man had suffered with similar symptoms from time to time, that, in fact, he had been treated by a psychiatrist some time before his marriage. The relatives of the man had said nothing whatever to his wife either before or after the marriage. The result was that she was completely at a loss to understand her husband's conduct. These tragedies are not uncommon. The only thing that can be done is to state the facts clearly and to follow the recommendations of the psychiatrist. In many cases of this type the psychiatrist will recommend institutional care. To this the members of the family will as a rule object, especially if they are unable to afford a private institution. In cases of this kind there



is little that can be done except to wait until the members of the family reconcile themselves to the recommendations made by the expert. It is, however, possible for us to counsel and guide them in reaching an earlier and wiser decision than they might arrive at without us.

### ETHICAL

The fifth class of problems may be correctly described as ethical, religious, or spiritual. Many of the problems that seem in the beginning of the study to be legal or economic or biological or even psychological turn out eventually to be fundamentally ethical. The emphasis that at different times has been placed upon the biological, the economic, and the psychological factors and the importance that we give to these factors in accordance with our own interests and predilections somewhat obscure the ethical character of many problems and their implications. The fact is that ethical concepts, religious fervors, and spiritual insights play a much larger part in the life of men and women than many are accustomed to believe. These concepts and fervors and insights may not come to the surface until after a number of interviews. But they nevertheless operate potently in the lives of men and women and are the source of many problems. These problems may extend from one end of the scale to the other. They may run from complaints about simple forms of misbehavior to intense struggles over complicated forms of intolerable conduct. Frequently, we can sense these sources of distress long before we can clearly see and define the cause itself.

One not uncommon cause of trouble on the ethical level is untruth and deception. Men and women do deceive each other in many ways, sometimes in regard to little things and sometimes in regard to important

matters. Strangely enough, some men and women do not look upon lying seriously. They seem to think that there is no great wrong in telling a falsehood or in practicing deception. Other men and women are highly sensitive ethically and suffer when they are deceived and misled. "My husband, I find, does not always tell me the truth. He tells me that he has business engagements when I discover later that he has really visited other homes. Naturally I feel unhappy because I find I cannot trust him completely. It is a terrible thing when you find that you mistrust your husband." The man confessed that he had lied to his wife on different occasions and that he had deceived her, but he could not understand why she was so much disturbed about the matter. The only solution was to try to help him realize that distrust is one great source of discord and distress in married life and that in order to trust each other the husband and wife must learn to speak the truth to each other, to confide in each other frankly, to live with each other in the spirit of sincerity. It is not always easy to convince men and women of this fact, but until they are convinced, it is impossible to end distrust and to achieve happiness.

Another cause of disturbance on this level is the difference in moral standards. Some men cannot understand why women object to drinking and gambling parties and to association with other women. These men have always believed in the double standard, that is, one code of morals for men and another code for women. But women do object to these things; women do have standards that they expect men as well as women to observe. "My husband insists upon living his own life. He does not seem to care how much his conduct embarrasses me or how much I suffer." Men and women should try to discover before they marry whether

they agree upon and accept the same code of conduct. But once they are married and dissension develops over the conduct of one or the other, there are only three solutions of the problem: both the man and the woman must agree to keep the same code; or one must reconcile himself or herself to the conduct of the other; or they must separate. Separation is the last resort, and all other possibilities should be explored before this solution is considered. For one party to the marriage contract to resign himself or herself to the conduct of the other person is never a very satisfactory solution; the cause of the trouble remains and continues openly or secretly to be a source of distress. The wisest solution is for both the man and the woman to agree upon the kind of life they are to live together. This is not as difficult as it may seem at the outset. Men and women are willing to do much in order to save their marriage and to safeguard their family.

In addition to fabrication and deception and in addition to disagreement in regard to moral standards and codes of conduct there are other causes of distress on the ethical level. For example, many women and some men complain of unfairness and unjust treatment. Men and women may not mean to be unfair or unjust to each other, but not infrequently they are. Perhaps there is more unfairness and injustice in family relationships than we are willing to admit. "My husband is not fair to us. He spends money on his own pleasures and hobbies and deprives us of what we actually need. My husband is not just in his treatment of me and our children. I know that he owes his elderly mother and father assistance, but he is assisting them too largely and at our expense." "My wife is not fair at all. She constantly demands more than I am able to give her. She wants luxuries that we simply cannot afford. It

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is not fair to insist upon things just because her friends have them." "Our parents have never been as fair in their attitudes as they should have been. My father has always favored my sister, and my mother has always favored me. This has led to constant friction in our home." The number of parents who complain that children today are unfair and unjust is larger, it seems, than in other generations. The source of their conduct undoubtedly is self-centeredness or perhaps plain selfishness.

These cases all reveal on the part of the man or woman accused a sense of fairness and justice that is undeveloped or dulled. Sometimes men and women will recognize wherein they are wrong when their attention is called to it. "I never thought that I was acting unfairly, but my wife is probably right, now that I consider the matter carefully." "Perhaps I have been a little too exacting in my demands. My husband really works very hard and I know that he does as much for all of us as he possibly can." "Yes, it is true that we have shown favoritism in our family and this has been unfair. But no one pointed this out to us before. I suppose that we just allowed our feelings of affection to express themselves thoughtlessly." These statements come from those who are fair enough to recognize their unfairness in family life. As a rule these cases require a long process of education of the moral sense. Sometimes it seems as if this is one of the programs necessary in the great majority of cases. Men and women do not grow ethically at the same rate or to the same degree that they grow physically and mentally. On the contrary, in most men and women the ethical faculty is in an immature stage and lags far behind the physical and mental development. This, however, does not come to the surface until these men and women are tested, and marriage and

family relationships do test and assay the moral fiber of men and women.

The most frequent cause of trouble on the ethical level is probably the failure of men and women to be patient with each other, to be forbearing and forgiving. The very way in which they speak to each other, gesture at each other, even look at each other reveals their lack of the spirit of forbearance and forgiveness, their impatience with each other's manner and conduct. "I know I have my faults, but my husband is never willing to bear with mine as I try to bear with his." "I know I often fail to do the things I should. But why is my wife so unforgiving?" These are the complaints that we hear most often and that are most often the source of distress. How to remedy this condition is in itself a problem. Men and women may love each other and still be so constituted that they may be just naturally impatient and find it burdensome to bear with others and difficult to forgive readily. They have not learned that compromise is necessary in life, not compromise of principle but compromise of programs and policies. They have not learned that surrender is not necessarily a sign of weakness; it may be a sign of great strength. They have not learned that firmness is an indication of character but that stubbornness is evidence of immaturity. As a rule, however, if men and women do love each other, they will be patient, they will make forbearance a part of their program of life, and they will not even find it necessary to practice forgiveness.

On the ethical and spiritual level perhaps the most important thing to determine is whether the man and woman still feel any respect, any regard for each other, whether even in a small measure any love lingers in their relationship. When a man and a woman have lost respect for each other, when they feel no regard for

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each other, when love itself is dead, there is nothing to do but to advise a separation. They may have different reasons, for the sake of the children, for example, to continue to live in the same house, but they cannot and should not live in the same room or associate with each other in the intimacies of husband and wife. To attempt any other solution is only to invite greater distress. The more difficult problem, however, arises when only the man or only the woman has lost respect and regard and love for the other and when the other still wants to retain the old relationship. This has happened again and again. If they separate, one of the two will suffer greatly; if they remain together, both will suffer; and still it is sometimes difficult to advise separation. One woman said, "I know my husband does not respect me, and I know that he does not love me. But I do love him, and I do not want to separate from him." The man in this case did in time leave his wife. This is what generally happens, but the decision must be reached by them and not by the counselor.

We may discover upon more careful study of the case that there is still some respect, some regard, some love left; that the embers of love are not cold and dead. This will be revealed in many ways, in the courtesies they still show each other, in the slight note of tenderness in their voice, in the concern in their glance, in their interest in each other's health and welfare. One woman who refused to go back home with her husband became greatly concerned and disturbed when he complained of feeling ill. One couple whose relationship had reached the lowest ebb were persuaded to speak of their early years with each other, of their courtship and of the days of their engagement and especially of the first years of their marriage. The more they spoke and the more they recalled, the warmer grew their manner and

their tone and the greater grew their reawakened affection. "How have we lost all this?" they finally asked each other. "But," said the wife with a woman's insight and intuition, "we have not lost it. Don't you see, dear, it has all come back?" Whenever love still lingers in the heart, whenever there is still interest and concern no matter how slight, there is hope of rekindling affection and regard. For men and women who still love each other even in the least degree cannot escape altogether the spell of the stronger love that once held them together in close embrace, the memories of the days when they meant so much to each other and in each other's life.

Even in the most extreme cases of distress much can be accomplished if love survives. One day a man telephoned in great excitement. "I must see you at once." When he entered the room, he looked completely distracted. "We have been married only two years, and I have discovered that my wife has been unfaithful to me. I am actually on the verge of committing suicide." "Where is your wife now?" "She is at home." I phoned the wife, and she agreed to come at once. "Is this story that your husband has told me true?" "Yes, and I suppose there is nothing for me to do but to end my own life." As we talked, the tragedy gradually unfolded itself. The young woman while on a vacation in Florida came under the influence of another woman who made it a business to ensnare younger women and to introduce them to men seeking pleasure in the southland. It took some time to quiet this couple and to get them to discuss their problem calmly. They both recognized the gravity of what had occurred. The wife was filled with remorse and deeply despondent but insisted that she still loved her husband; the husband insisted that he still loved his wife and at last agreed to forgive her. They moved into a new neighborhood and established a new home and

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opened a new chapter in their life. The scars of this tragic episode will never disappear altogether, but the love that survived even infidelity has saved their marriage.

One danger the counselor in marriage and family affairs must guard against is the danger of assigning a case to one class or category when it really belongs to another. Men and women may not themselves know the true nature of their trouble; they may, in fact, misunderstand their own case completely. They may think that the trouble is biological when in truth it is psychological in its origin. Or men and women may for different reasons try to deceive themselves and to deceive us also. They may not want to admit even to themselves the truth in the case. One woman assured me at the beginning of our conference that the cause of conflict with her husband was only economic. "We cannot agree upon the proper distribution of our income. My husband refuses to economize at any point." "Where do you think your husband could economize?" "I am sure he could economize in his office expenses." "How?" "He has a secretary that he could dismiss and I could do the work just as well." "Tell me something about this secretary." The more the woman talked, the clearer it became that the thing that really disturbed her was not the distribution of her husband's income but the distribution of her husband's time and interest. When the man came, he acknowledged the facts. "What do you think you should do?" "I think I should do what any honorable person would do—dismiss my secretary and try to save my marriage."

## STRUCTURE—ORGANIZATION—FUNCTION

The normal family today is composed of mother, father, and children. Any weakness or defect in this



structure of family life in our time may lead to distress. The absence of the father or mother, the absence of children, or the introduction of other relatives into the home may prove to be a source of discord. It would not be difficult to cite cases to illustrate each one of these points. Perhaps the one case met most frequently involves other relatives. "My wife and I had no difficulty whatever until my father died and it was necessary for me to take my mother into our home. My mother is a good woman, but she is uneducated and old. My wife is still in her early thirties and is well educated and very intelligent. She has no patience, however, with my mother, and my mother feels that she is unwelcome as a result. What do you think we should do?" This is often a difficult problem to solve. It is easy to say that the mother-in-law should be placed elsewhere. But the wife is often unwilling to make the adjustments that are necessary. In this particular case the relations between the wife and her mother-in-law had been always more or less strained, and it was simply impossible to end the tension between the two. The husband, on the other hand, felt that he could not ask his mother to live in a furnished room or to go to a home for the aged and infirm. This condition continued until the death of the mother-in-law solved the problem. But death is not always so kind.

The organization of the family in America is not finally fixed. In many families conflicts arise because of the persistence of forms of organization that we are now outgrowing and that the younger generation will not tolerate. "Our father is very much of a dictator. He insists that we must obey him and that he must be in control of our family life. He not only issues orders to our mother, which is bad enough; he tries to compel us to do the things that he wants and to follow the courses

of action that he thinks are right. He does not seem to realize that life is changing and that we have our own opinions and our own views of what is right and what is wrong." In cases of this kind it is frequently impossible to do much with the husband and father. He is still living in the patriarchal period of family development and is convinced that his word should be law to his wife and also to his children. The children, on the other hand, rebel against autocratic authority, and the wife may be in revolt. The utmost we can do is to assist the members of a family of this type to live in the same house with the least amount of irritation and antagonism. Disagreements will constantly arise no matter what is done, but people may disagree and still not distress each other. If they cannot engage in common counsel and cooperative endeavor, they at least can learn to live in accordance with the principle of toleration.

The function of the family men and women seldom define to themselves. But tradition often unconsciously shapes their conceptions, and these conceptions or misconceptions lead to conflict. "My husband seems to think that the sole purpose of marriage is to produce children and especially sons. I am worn out with one pregnancy after another, and I cannot go through it again." This woman undoubtedly expressed what some men and women still believe, and her protest was altogether legitimate. Through the family the race is reproduced, but this is not its sole or even its principal function today. "Our parents seem to think that our only purpose in life is to conserve our family possessions and to add what we can to what we have already accumulated." The two young people who made this statement expressed what is in the minds of many parents. They do not seem to realize that conservation of assets and protection of the members of the family are only one

function to be fulfilled. "My wife is altogether too proud of the name we bear. She seems to think that our only destiny is to perpetuate our family fame. Our family has made some contribution to life, but my wife constantly confuses the contribution with the name itself." No doubt there are many men and women whose pride lies in the position and prestige and power the family has achieved and not in the service the family has rendered. These misconceptions often can be corrected through wise counsel.

The greatest service we as counselors can render is to assist men and women to translate into social practice what is expressed in this paragraph from "The Meaning of Marriage and the Foundations of the Family" (pp. 152-153):

"The highest function the family can perform today is to educate and train and discipline young men and women who themselves in time will constitute the new social state. It is the task of these young men and women through their own talents and acquired skills to increase the material resources, to enrich the intellectual treasures, and to deepen the spiritual reservoirs upon which society must draw for nourishment and energy in both personal improvement and in social progress. In the changing dream of parenthood we have come to see that children are entrusted to our care not in order that they may serve us in life or worship at our grave; but in order that they may translate into realities the ideals toward which we, the elders, can merely grope through a blinding mist of agony and tears. If the family can be freed to perform this function, it will become in ampler days and under a more gracious sky not only a dynamic but a beneficent factor in world society."

## CHAPTER 15

### FAMILY COUNSELING IN WARTIME

War widens the opportunity and deepens the need for family counseling. In the first place, we find that all the problems that exist in peace-time are accentuated in time of war. The problems that generally develop on the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical levels are the same problems, but they seem to grow in importance and in magnitude. This is due to the tension, the strain, the tremendous pressure under which men and women live in a war environment and a war atmosphere. In this atmosphere and environment every problem, no matter how common, assumes greater proportions and more sinister aspects. "When did this problem develop in your married life? When did you and your husband begin to quarrel about how much you should spend for food and how much for dress?" "Oh, we have been quarreling about these matters for years; but we have never quarreled so bitterly as we do now." "How long has this dissension existed in your family? How long have you and your children been antagonizing each other in this matter of associations?" "Why, I have never approved of the young people our children went with, but now our children seem more difficult and more defiant than ever." These experiences, we find, are repeated again and again. In other words, every pain, every wound, every discord is aggravated in time of war.

In the second place, conditions that exist in a subacute stage in time of peace and that never before gave men

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and women much concern or led to disturbance often reach in wartime an acute stage and develop into a crisis. Men and women and young people and even children who manage to get along fairly well from day to day in a simple and routine environment find that they are unable to stand the strain that war and war excitements impose upon them. "Has your son always been so highly neurotic?" "No, he has not. He has always been a little irritable and nervous; but only within the last year has he been in this condition. I told him that a defense factory would be too much for him." "Your daughter does not look like a bad girl. How long has she been staying out so late at night?" "Only within the last six months. She was always a little willful and sometimes a little wild; but the excitement of the war seems to have gotten into her blood, and we can do nothing with her." "You and your wife still seem to be fond of each other. How do you account for this friction that now mars your relationship?" "My wife has always criticized me for the way in which I eat. Now she complains that it gives her indigestion to sit at the same table with me." Moods that merely simmer in peace-time may easily reach the boiling point in a war period and cause serious damage. Not infrequently, in fact, minor incidents develop into major causes of distress.

In the third place, new situations are developing both within and without the areas in which during the past we were accustomed to search for the causes of distress. We are now coming in the field of marriage and family counseling face to face with sources of trouble that are as unexpected and disconcerting as the new manifestations of disease that appear from time to time in human history. The wave of respiratory virus infections that swept the continents in the winter of 1943-44 is no

more startling than the epidemic of juvenile delinquencies now appearing in every country. Young boys and girls today are earning money that they never earned before, that no generation of young people even dreamed of earning. This is a new phenomenon and is leading to new problems in parent and child relationships and many forms of delinquent behavior. The rapid and unprecedented spread of venereal infections in young boys and especially young girls who are little more than children is no more astounding than is the widely extended disintegration that is taking place in the families of America. In other years and other decades we have met maladjusted families, disorganized families, broken families, families with one or the other parent absent temporarily or permanently. Today the whole structure of the family is shattered and the organization of the family completely disrupted. Total war involves the family as a whole and means a total dissolution of all the relationships that we are accustomed to cultivate in family life.

Much is now being said about rehabilitation, and rehabilitation is unquestionably a part of the program that must be developed. But this term must not be conceived in too limited a sense. Rehabilitation is, in the first place, medical. The men and women who are ill or injured or crippled, physically or psychically, must be restored to full health and strength and power as far as is possible. This is the work of the hospital and health agencies. Rehabilitation is, in the second place, vocational. Men and women who have been out of their customary occupations or who are incapable of returning to the work they formerly did must be retrained and replaced. This is the work of the vocational expert and the placement agency, private and public. Rehabilitation, in the third place, is mental. In spite

of all that is being done in and outside the camps to keep men and women in the armed forces in touch with normal life and normal processes, men and women upon their return to civilian life will find themselves thinking and acting in accordance with their military training and military discipline. To reeducate them, to reorientate them to civilian life, is the work of the teacher and the educational agencies. Rehabilitation, in the fourth place, is spiritual. Many men and women will return disillusioned, cynical, utterly without faith in truth or goodness or beauty. These men and women will constitute a grave problem to themselves and to society. It is chiefly the work of the minister and religious agencies to aid these men to recover their faith in the validity of ethical principles, in the supremacy of the moral law, in the duty and the power of man to create a world of justice and brotherhood and peace.

How can family counselors cope with these old problems in accentuated form with the acute conditions and crises that are developing out of prewar subnormalities and with the unprecedented family disruptions and disasters that the war itself has created? It is not probable that we shall be able to increase our own powers, to acquire greater skills, and to devise new techniques in time to save many families and to solve their problems. Nor is it likely that the city, the State, the Federal Government, or communities will establish the agencies and the institutions, both of the old type and the new, that are so desperately needed and without which little can be accomplished in safeguarding family life. We must be realistic enough to recognize the fact that we are limited in numbers, that we are still in the early stages of professional procedures, that we lack the legislation, the organization, and the machinery that we need for adequate service; but, on the other hand,

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we must not yield to discouragement and despair. We must instead endeavor to develop new strength, new wisdom, new vision, new faith that will make it possible to serve men and women in new and better ways. As a war speeds up industrial processes and scientific experimentation, so it must speed up the program of marriage and family counseling. Out of our experience in wartime may and should come a maturity of understanding and a mastery of material that will place the marriage and family consultation center in the foreground of community services.

### LEGAL PROBLEMS

In time of war many confusing problems appear as a result of the different codes of law under which the members of the family must live. As soon as a man or woman enlists or is drafted, he or she passes from the jurisdiction of the civil authorities to the jurisdiction of the military authorities. In peace-time legal problems are difficult enough owing to the fact that some acts come under the civil law and some under the criminal law, and to the further fact that some part of life is under the control of the law of the state in which men and women live and that some part of life is under the law of the Federal Government and that some part of life is even subject to international law. Other complications arise because the laws of the different states do not always agree with each other and what is regarded as legal and valid in one state is not always accepted as legal and valid in another. When martial law is invoked and when war is declared, all these legal complexities are still further complicated by the operation of another code with which most men and women are not even acquainted. They do not know that there is a code of military law, that there are military courts with their



own rules of evidence and procedure, and that the authority of military officers is much greater than the authority of civil servants. The counselor in family affairs, therefore, must act with extreme caution and circumspection. He must never act in these matters without the counsel and the cooperation of experts in military law, for conflict with military authorities may become a serious matter especially in the midst of war.

"My brother, I have just learned, is to be court-martialed. I do not know exactly what he has done, but I am sure he has done nothing serious enough to warrant this action. He is not the kind to do wrong." What is not regarded as wrong in civil life may be very wrong in a military camp; and what is not serious in peace-time may become very serious in time of war. This the members of the family must be made to understand, and the family must also understand that action on our part that is warranted in civil life is unwarranted in military matters and may only aggravate the case. One thing that the counselor can do is to write directly to the post commander to inquire the nature of the charges and to learn something about the record of the man. The commander as a rule will answer directly or through one of his subordinates; but he will resent any interference with military authority, wittingly or unwittingly. Another plan, and perhaps the better one, is to approach the commander of the post through some organization that is related to the Army, through some agency that knows military law and procedure. In this case under discussion the man, it was learned, had done nothing more serious than to use an army truck out of the prescribed hours to call upon a young lady in a near-by community. He had done this repeatedly and had also been guilty of some minor violations on other

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occasions. This counted against him. Yet owing to his record as an officer he was not dishonorably dismissed, a happening which was what the family feared would occur, but he was demoted. Whether the interest expressed by the counselor in the case was in any way effective could not be learned.

The man in the service, it is also necessary to understand, is able to invoke a law that assures him protection against civil action. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act, passed in 1940 and amended in October, 1942, protects the rights of persons in the military service in certain civil proceedings. Its purpose is "to promote and strengthen the national defense by suspending enforcement of certain civil liabilities of certain persons serving in the Military and Naval Establishments, including Coast Guard." There is no doubt that this Act is of benefit to both the man in service and his family in many cases involving insurance policies, eviction for nonpayment of rent, and property liabilities, for among other things it authorizes the court in its discretion in any action or proceeding commenced against a person in military service before or during the period of such service, or within ninety days thereafter, to stay the execution of any judgment or order entered against such person; and to vacate or stay any attachment and garnishment of money, property, or debts in the hands of another, whether before or after judgment. But, on the other hand, this Act may and does result in injustices in many cases. A woman, for example, can sue her husband for divorce or alimony; but under this law the action can at once be blocked by the court. Yet the husband, it seems, can sue his wife for divorce and take action against her without legal hindrance. In one case a man succeeded in establishing residence in a southern state and served

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notice of divorce proceedings on his wife through the newspapers. The wife is unable to contest the case, since she is out of funds and is ill. If her husband marries again, she may not be able to secure any part of the allowance now sent her, though the law allows a divorced wife a maximum of \$42 a month.

The matter of allowances presents other problems that are legal in character. The law seems to be specific in stating the allowance that is to be granted to the dependents of a man in service. But the problem sometimes becomes unexpectedly complicated. "My son sends me only a small amount out of his allowance. How can I persuade him to send me more?" The monthly pay of the soldier is stipulated, and the law also states what part he may keep and what part he may designate to be sent to his relatives. But when all the evidence was gathered in this case, it was discovered that the young soldier had married without his mother's knowledge and that he had arranged, as was natural, for the larger part of his pay to be sent to his wife. This, however, did not solve the mother's problem. She needed more than she was receiving and some program had to be worked out to meet her needs. Whenever a question of allowances arises, it is important first of all to find out the facts, and the facts are not always easy to find. Members of the family and other interested persons may possess information that will be helpful. But the best plan is to discuss the problem at once with the agency that is most competent to serve in these cases. The Army has established a Department of Personal Affairs, and this Department has offices in all the larger communities. The Navy has also established the Navy Relief Society, which functions in the same way. The National Jewish Welfare Board, a nongovernmental agency, has likewise established a division known as

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the Army and Navy Personal Service. These are the agencies to consult.

The benefits to which a discharged soldier or sailor is entitled are another problem that is legal as well as social. This problem will grow in importance and insistence as the discharges increase and will reach its maximum volume and pressure with the demobilization. The danger is that the discharged soldier or sailor will not know where to go for what he wants or needs and that others will unintentionally misdirect him. The result will be disappointment and bitterness and distrust. In order that misunderstanding and confusion may be reduced as far as possible, the military authorities are establishing central offices to be known as the Veterans' Service Center. This Center is staffed with officials who know the resources that are available within the community and in different sections of the country, and they not only can direct the veteran to the right agency but can tell him exactly what he may expect. A chart prepared by Roland Baxt and Seymour Blumenthal of the Federation Employment Service, a constituent agency of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropic Societies of New York, outlines the needs and the agencies and the benefits in the New York area. This chart will change in content from time to time, but the scheme adopted serves as a guide to community resources and can be consulted with confidence. If each community would prepare a similar chart and keep it current and if each counselor would possess this chart, much time and energy would be saved and endless inquiries and discussions reduced to a minimum.

What the man in the service and the discharged soldier and sailor and the family need in most instances is a correct interpretation, an interpretation of the law, an interpretation of procedures, an interpretation of

the problems themselves. "What is the difference between an allotment and an allowance?" "What allowances are prescribed for different dependents, and how may they be secured?" "Is any provision made for the medical and social care of the families of soldiers, and where can this care be found?" "I have learned that my son needs an operation. Could we have our own doctor examine him? Have we any voice in the medical or social treatment of our son? How can I find out what is the matter with our son; why have we not been informed of the facts?" "What is happening to my parents?" "I have not heard from my wife; is there anything wrong with her or our child?" "How can I arrange for legal service that my family needs in my absence?" These and a thousand other questions are asked, and they must all be answered. War is war, but war does not silence the concern and the anxiety and the fear that men and women feel. If it is possible for the family counselor in wartime to acquire the knowledge that is necessary to answer these questions understandingly and correctly, it will be of greatest service in saving soldiers and sailors and families from distress. If this is not possible, the counselor must assemble the material, the charts, the guides, the private and governmental publications that will permit him or her to direct the man or the family to the agency or organization or institution that is best equipped to meet the need. For these needs cannot go unmet.

### ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

In wartime the economic problems necessarily differ from the problems in time of peace. When a nation goes to war today, it is compelled to convert itself into a vast war machine. This means radical changes in the agricultural, the industrial, the commercial, even

the financial system of the country. In the first place, ten million men and more in America are taken out of the working group and placed in the armed forces. Their places must be filled by other and older men or by women. In the second place, the productive powers and capacities of the country are suddenly transferred from production for civilian use to production for military use. This imposes unexpected changes in occupations, in available commodities, and in the price structure and controls. In the third place, the income of families of men enlisted or drafted is in most cases greatly reduced; and the income of other families is greatly increased. The conversion to a war economy inevitably leads to dislocations and conflicts on the economic level, and these dislocations and conflicts will probably become even more serious when the war ends, when the men are demobilized, and when the country endeavors painfully to return to a peace-time program. These changes, overwhelming in their force and magnitude, create problems that manifestly must affect family life and family relations. The degree to which the counselor can be of service in meeting the problems on this level will depend in large part upon his or her understanding of war economics and his or her mastery of the techniques and facilities that must be employed in meeting new situations.

One of the most common economic problems is the readjustment of the budget and the standard of living. "We had an income of \$250 a month before the war. How can I live on the allowance I now receive from the Government?" This is the question that women are facing everywhere in the country. It is true that for some women even the allowance they receive is higher and more regular than the low and intermittent wage of the husband before the war. But this is not true for

most women. For the average woman the drafting of the husband means that she must plan out a new economic program for herself and her child or children. It may be possible for her to supplement the government allowance in different ways, directly and indirectly. In some cases a part of the man's income may continue from his profession or the company for which he worked; in some cases the members of the family may assist with gifts and subsidies; in some cases the woman may move into the home of her own or her husband's family and in this way save the cost of rent; in some cases the woman herself may be able to earn enough to maintain the standard of living; in some cases the community agencies may aid in meeting such needs as the care of children and medical service. Every possible resource must be considered, and every area must be explored. Even then it may be necessary in the great majority of cases to assist women and families to adjust themselves to a lower standard of living. This adjustment includes not only the preparation of the budget; more important, it frequently includes the education of the woman in the management of her stated income and her home.

Should the woman work? This is an old question with new meaning and new implications. Some women are going to work in war industries out of patriotic motives. They feel they want to be in the war as is the man. There can be no doubt about this. Some women are going to work because they must add to their allowance or income. It is the one way that they can maintain their economic independence and standard of living. This is clear. But there are other women who are going to work in order to escape what they regard as the drudgery of household labors. And there are other women who are going to work in order to provide

themselves with unwarranted luxuries in wartime. The first question that a woman should ask herself is this: "Where am I needed most?" If the woman is needed most in her home, to take care of the children and to keep house for her husband, that is where she should be persuaded to stay. If the woman is needed most in a war plant or in some occupation to release a man who is needed in the armed forces, then she should be advised to enroll for work. But in no case should the woman be permitted to enroll for work anywhere until adequate provision is made for the care of her children. This in most communities means that the Government must establish a better constructed program than now exists for the care of infants, preschool children, and children of school age. The Government must recognize that the care of children of women in war work is a necessary and legitimate part of a war budget.

A new problem that has arisen in this war concerns youth and work. "My son is not interested in school any longer. He is only fifteen, but he will not go back. He wants to work and to earn money." "I want my daughter to continue her education. But she will not reenter college. She insists upon finding a position. What shall I do?" The sudden and marked decline in registration in both high school and college in every state is evidence of the change that has come over both young girls and young boys. They hear of the high wages that are being paid during the war period, and they cannot resist the temptation to leave school and to go to work. They are now earning more money than their older brothers and sisters did before the war. This creates new attitudes that seriously complicate relationships in the family. In the first place, these young people do not understand the value of the money they earn and misspend what they have; in the second



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place, they come to feel a sense of economic independence that leads to resentment against any parental direction and rebellion against any form of supervision. In these situations the counselor really faces three problems: one, how to convince youth of the importance of education; two, how to teach youth the value of the wages they earn; three, how to save youth from a disregard, even a contempt, for authority. These are not simple problems, since no problem that involves the adolescent is simple; but much can be done to save youth and to reintegrate youth into family life if the counselor is patient, sympathetic, understanding, and above all youthful himself or herself at least in spirit.

Another new problem in this war is the migratory industrial family. The migratory family in the agricultural field is well known, the family that moves from place to place with the ripening of berries and with the harvesting of the crops. These families have always been a source of much concern. Now there is developing another type of migratory family as the result of the rapid changes taking place in war industries. Boom towns spring up almost overnight, and entire families from near and far rush to these towns to find work and to share in the high wages that are offered. Some of these boom towns are already on the decline. War contracts are filled, or they are canceled; the manufacturing plants are dismissing men, and the families are migrating to other sections. This problem will increase in extent and seriousness as the industrial demobilization takes place. But there is little that the counselor can do to save the migratory family without the cooperation of facilities and agencies that transcend state lines. The dangers that threaten the migratory family, dangers to health and educational development and family organization, are evident to anyone who meets this unhappy

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group of men and women and children intermittently on the move. Perhaps the greatest service the counselor can contribute to social welfare is to expose the dangers and the evils that he uncovers. The absence of the home, the lack of proper food and regular meals, the neglect of education and recreation and health, the overwork, and the general instability of life all make it impossible for the migratory family to achieve a stable and wholesome family life. Little can be done with the migratory family until the family itself is economically stabilized.

As the war proceeds and men return and reconversion takes place, the whole vast and complicated problem of unemployment, vocational guidance, and vocational training and vocational placement assumes unprecedented proportions. The men who are injured and crippled will have to be retrained for other occupations, and this in itself will prove to be, is already proving to be, a gigantic task. The men who have been away from civilian life and who have lost their skills will have to be reeducated, and this will require time. Some men, it is evident now, will not want to return to their former work and will have to be guided into new fields of economic endeavors. In addition to this group of the returning men and women, there will be the still larger group of men and women who now work in war plants. These men and women will have to find other work when the war ends. To what extent they will be able to employ their newly acquired training and experience and skills in the postwar world it is not possible at the present time to predict. But it is clear that this nationwide problem in the vocational field will demand the organization of a nation-wide program of vocational service and a staff of vocational experts in every community. The family counselor except in rare instances is not an expert in the vocational field; the only thing

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he or she can do is to caution men and women against thinking of fields of work that will be uncongenial and that will lead to frustrations, and then to place these men and women in care of specialized vocational agencies.

### BIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

The problems on the biological level are increasing in both number and in kind during the war period. This is due in part to the strain and tension and fatigue that war and war activities always bring. No one can escape the effects of the war atmosphere any more than anyone can escape the influence of the climate in which he or she lives. Unconsciously we absorb our environment and react to the pressures that surround and play upon us; and our reactions unquestionably affect and interfere with our family relationships. The problems are also due in some part to the desire to take advantage of the current opportunities to earn larger incomes. Both men and women are undertaking work that means taking chances with their health, and this in turn imperils their family life and handicaps family development. These men and women do not seem to realize that hazards to health may also become hazards to happiness. The spread of venereal diseases is another source of family problems that lead to suffering and often to tragic conflicts. It is sad enough when men become infected with a venereal disease; it is far worse when they bring their infections into their home and poison the innocent members of their family. Many other problems arise in this area as a result of the misuse of contraceptives and the employment of abortion as a means of escape. Young men and women particularly are becoming the victims of their ignorance and inexperience in matters that really mean life or death.

"My husband is a changed man. He is so nervous and so irritable that we are afraid to talk to him when he comes home from the office." "What does your husband do?" "He is an executive in what they call an essential industry." "How long does he work?" "Now he works all day long, six days a week, sometimes on Sunday and often at night." There was no doubt that this man was overworking and that the overwork was leading to physical and nervous exhaustion. He did not get sufficient rest, he did not eat regularly, and he allowed himself no time for recreation. He knew that he was "not himself," as he put it, but he insisted that the war demanded his time and commandeered all his powers. How could he help himself? His business was being speeded up to the last notch; he had to watch the machines every moment, or something would go wrong. He did not at first seem to understand that something had already gone wrong, that he and his family and their family relationships had suffered severely as a result of the tension under which he was working. This is what is happening in homes all over the country. The question is, "Can the counselor be of any service?" As a rule he cannot do much. The war must go on; the needs of the armed forces must be met; the plant cannot pause for a moment. This is true, but it is only fair to remember that even the soldier in the field has his periods of rest in between battles and that men on the home front must have their days of relaxation. Relaxation at least relieves the strain and gives the man and the family a chance to recover themselves and to reestablish their life.

At the present time hospitals and sanatoria report an unexpected decline in the number of admissions of tuberculosis cases. This decline is not due, as some thought in the beginning, to a drop in the number

of tuberculosis cases in the community or the country. It is due to the fact that even the tuberculous are rushing into defense plants to earn the higher wages that are paid in this period of emergency. And what is happening in the tuberculosis field is happening in other fields as well and with other groups. Men and women are disregarding their ailments; they are postponing treatment; they are allowing incipient weaknesses to develop into acute conditions that will make a cure difficult or impossible. These men and women, it must be remembered, are not only individuals; they are members of families, and they cannot endanger themselves without seriously involving and jeopardizing their family life. "I told my wife that she could not stand that work in the factory. I knew and she knew that she had some form of heart trouble. Now see what has happened! She has gone to pieces completely. Who is going to take care of the children and the house?" This story will be repeated a thousand times over and over again as cases progress from an incipient to an acute stage. Then it is too late for the counselor. The only thing the counselor can do is to warn men and women, in private and in public, that their family is in danger and that for the sake of the family it is the duty to everyone to resist the temptation of a temporary high wage scale. A temporary gain may and often does mean a permanent loss.

The wave of venereal infections since the beginning of the war has created problems that were seldom if ever met before the war began. "My daughter is ill. The doctor tells me she has a venereal disease. I do not understand it. She is only sixteen. Her father is terribly upset and bitter. I do not know what to do with him." Venereal disease, it is evident, is not only a medical matter; it is also a family problem. The mother

in this case is miserable over the condition of her child; the father is not only bitter but blames the mother for not taking better care of his daughter; and the girl herself is resentful and rebellious. "How was I to know that I would catch this disease? No one ever told me about it." There is, of course, too little sex hygiene and sex education in the schools and in the homes, but it is of no use to discuss this now. The girl is in need of treatment and must be placed in charge of the physician or clinic that is best equipped to take care of the case. Then the work must begin with the mother and father. It will not help for them to quarrel with their daughter or to quarrel with each other. The daughter's condition is the result of misconduct. It may be that they are responsible for the way in which the girl has misbehaved. It may be that they have failed to give her the guidance and supervision she needed. If so, they must understand and recognize this fact. On the other hand, it may be that they are in no way responsible for what has happened to the girl. They may have done their utmost to protect her. But no matter who is responsible, it is of no avail to let the condition of the child serve as a source of discord in family life.

Even more distressing are the cases of the unmarried mothers that are increasing in so many communities. These young girls think they know how to protect themselves, but they know very little about contraceptives and the damage they do. They know only what they have learned from their friends, and their friends probably have no reliable information and scientific instruction. The result is pregnancy with all that pregnancy involves for a young unmarried girl. Only those who meet these girls and their panic-stricken parents can understand the shame and sorrow and terror that overcome them. "How can we ever outlive

this disgrace? What shall we do with our daughter? What shall we do with the baby?" These are questions that cannot be answered easily. There are too many factors to consider. Is marriage advisable, even if the man can be found and is willing to marry the girl? Can the girl stay at home, or will it be better to stay elsewhere during the period of her pregnancy? What care does she need during this time, both physical and spiritual? Is it wiser to persuade her to keep the baby or to place it for adoption? The whole case must be studied patiently and sympathetically and intelligently. If the counselor is inexperienced and unprepared to do this, and some are and some are not, then the best plan is to place the case in the care of an agency that is working with unmarried mothers and with adoption programs. It must also not be forgotten that, while the parents and the girl are in need of service, the baby is also a matter of concern. The plan of treatment must include what is best for the baby who after all is innocent of any evil.

A related and equally tragic problem is the problem of abortion. There is no doubt that many young women and many older women as well are resorting to abortion today in order to escape the burden of bearing a child. All reports indicate that the number is larger than in peace-time. What should the counselor advise when the problem is presented? It has all the elements of acute distress and all the associations of tragedy. It is true that abortions may be legally induced in order to save a woman's life; it is also true that an abortion is a surgical operation and does not involve any greater risk when performed by a surgeon with surgical procedure; and it is likewise true that some time in the future both science and society will probably sanction abortion for economic and social reasons just as both science and society have come to sanction contraception for

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economic and social reasons as well as for health. But the counselor at present is unwise to venture into this debatable area of discussion. The chief task of the counselor is to warn the woman, married or unmarried, against the dangers of unskilled and incompetent practitioners and also to warn her against drugs that may gravely endanger her health and damage the organs of her body. In moments of desperation a woman may be tempted to employ methods that mean permanent damage and even death. The life of a woman is a sacred thing and should be safeguarded and preserved. It is better for an unmarried woman to bear the burden of pregnancy than to lose her life. It is better for a married woman with children to bear another child than to rob her children of their mother and her husband of his wife.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

On no level of life are more problems developing during wartime than on the psychological. These problems are being discussed in lectures and conferences, in organization reports and scientific meetings, in newspapers and pamphlets, in magazines and books; in fact, everywhere men and women are concerned about the psychological, the psychiatric conditions that are arising as a result of the war. These conditions are due undoubtedly chiefly to new factors: one, the larger number of people included in the war program; and two, the tremendous and almost incredible impact of war upon everyone everywhere. In no war has so large a percentage of the population been engaged in war activities, in the armed forces, in war industries, in semi-civilian and semimilitary enterprises. In no war have the strain and pressure been so great, the shock so intense, the devastation so widespread and so terrible,



the murders and the massacres so cruel and brutal and barbaric. In no war have the explosions been so destructive both of material and of men and the concussions so paralyzing to both body and mind of all age groups. The surprising thing is not that so many men and women are suffering with neurotic and psychotic disturbances; the surprising thing is that so many of us are able to maintain even a semblance of mental poise and emotional stability. Some of these problems coming to the counselor today are comparatively simple and can be solved in one or two visits. Other problems are more severe and require the service of experts; and still other problems are so grave that nothing can be done and the victims must be counted as casualties of the war.

Some of the simpler cases complain of nothing more than a sense of great loneliness, and others of a deep feeling of lonesomeness. "I have lived and worked in this community for years; but I have never felt so utterly alone as I do now. At times I get so depressed that I grow almost desperate." This person, a woman under thirty and unmarried, expressed what a multitude of both men and women must feel. This sense of loneliness is not due entirely to the fact that so many men have been taken out of community life. It is due also—perhaps it is due in largest measure—to the fact that all men and women are in these times so busy with their own affairs, so immersed in their own personal problems, that they lose all contact with each other. No mail, no messages, all the wires are down or dead! One has only to sit in the subway or bus or to walk through the streets of the city to realize how deeply absorbed men and women are in their own life and how little real communication there is with others. Those suffer most from this sense of loneliness who have built up no inward life of their own, no interests to pursue, no

artistic talents to cultivate, no high ambitions to sustain and inspire them. They have no inner resources and reserves on which to draw; and it may be too late, certainly there is little time, to fill in the void. One solution the counselor can offer to these men and women is an earnest effort to interest themselves in others. It is often surprising to discover how interest in others awakens an interest in us. The lanes of communication are then restored, and companionship begins.

The feeling of lonesomeness is different from the feeling of loneliness. It comes to those who miss some one person, to women especially who in wartime miss their husbands. "The days seem so empty and the nights are almost unbearable. We used to discuss every little problem with each other. The children, of course, miss their father, but not in the same way that I do. I do not feel alone; there are too many members of my family and too many friends near at hand to allow me to feel lonely; but I do feel dreadfully lonesome." There are cases in which this feeling becomes so intense that it not only darkens but disorganizes the whole of one's life. This is unquestionably true in the cases in which the feeling of lonesomeness is complicated by the feeling of uncertainty and the feeling of fear as to the future. For some women and even for some men there can be no compensation for the losses they suffer whether the losses be temporary or permanent. But there are things that can comfort them. Sometimes there are many things. The years that men and women spend with each other and that nothing can alter, the tasks that are still unfinished and that should be completed, the service that others need and that sublimates our own sorrow, the solemn pride of a life sacrificed in high endeavors, these are things that do not die and that can make life again livable and meaningful and real and rich.

To aid men and women to understand this, to assist them to appreciate the intangible possessions that are still their own, to teach them not to depend upon others but to draw upon the spiritual reservoirs of their inward life—this is surely a part of a counseling service in time of war.

Insecurity is another source of many problems in time of war. This sense of insecurity affects all age groups, adults, adolescents, children, and even infants. The relationships that sustain and strengthen men and women in normal times are sundered in wartime; the network of customs and conventions, laws and regimentation that surround and support groups and communities in their everyday life is rent at many points when war comes; the old aims and objectives are obscured or disappear and the new seem unreal and unsure; the very foundations of life are shaken and shifted. In some cases the feeling of insecurity is so profound, the feeling that we are living in the midst of unseen forces and unknown evils is so aggravated, the feeling that we are falling into a bottomless abyss is so terrifying that only an expert, a psychiatrist, can safely undertake care and treatment. But this is not true in most cases. What most men and women and youth especially need is the assurance that the home still stands, that the family still survives, that the routine of life is still maintained. "It is a relief just to see the children start to school in the morning, to set the table at night, to cook the supper as I have always done. These things give me a feeling that life is still safe." This woman was right. It is the duty of everyone in wartime to maintain as far as is possible the life of the home. In order to "feel at home," which is the answer to the sense of insecurity, it is necessary first of all to have a home and to make this home our own.

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Many young men are being discharged from the Army with the diagnosis "neurotic" or "psychoneurotic." Some of these young men do not even know the meaning of this term "psychoneurotic" and think that they are perfectly normal; others realize that they are mildly disturbed and maladjusted; and others still are so severely affected that they require institutional care and treatment. But unless these young men are referred to the proper agencies for service, unless they are given the necessary treatment, the consequences may be exceedingly serious. Unfortunately, the Army does not arrange for this form of service. The first step is to explain to these young men the exact nature of their trouble; the next step is to instruct the family as to the condition and the prognosis; the third step is to place the young man in charge of the agency or institution that his condition indicates. In some of the milder types nothing more is needed than guidance in the process of readjustment to normal life. In the more developed types it is necessary to refer the young man to a psychiatrist or mental hygiene clinic; in the more progressive types the young man must be placed in an institution. One young man who seemed on the edge of a complete breakdown recovered within three months to such an extent that he was able to return to his former occupation. Perhaps the most important thing to do is to help these young men and their families to understand that they are ill and that their illness is no more a disgrace than any other illness would be. In no case must we allow the term "neurotic" or "psychoneurotic" to brand a young man either in his own eyes or in the eyes of others.

One of the most difficult problems on the psychological level is found in the attitude of the family to the soldier. Soldiers are coming back injured and crippled and

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mained physically and psychologically. Their recovery and readjustment depend in some part upon the way in which the members of the family meet them and act. Most families will have to be educated and to learn how to conduct themselves; but no one program of education can be commended for all cases. Families differ and cases differ. One thing, however, all families must remember is that convalescence and the process of readjustment take time; some men will take longer than others to reestablish themselves. A second thing that families must remember is that too much care and too constant solicitude may lead to dependency. These men who are now suffering the reaction from the high tension of war need to rediscover their own powers, to recapture their own spirit of independence. But the most important thing for families to remember is that the man who returns is a very different person from the man who went away. Changes have come, often very great changes. There has been a rapid and forced maturity, and there may be evidence of new and unsuspected forces. These men have passed through the fiery furnace of war, and they cannot be expected to come forth unscathed. Families must study these changes with the aid of others, under the expert guidance of counselors if possible, and they must learn how to adjust themselves to the changes. Otherwise, there will be only maladjustment and misery.

### ETHICAL PROBLEMS

On the ethical level men and women are wrestling with problems that range all the way from the simplest questions of what is right to the most complicated discussions in the field of morals. Many of these problems arise because some men and women are mentally distracted and emotionally confused in wartime more than

they are in peace-time. In the midst of social excitement and turmoil they cannot see clearly, and they lose their sense of direction. They want to go in the right way, but they are not sure which is north and which is south. In other cases the chief trouble is that men and women and especially young people seem to assume that in wartime the moral law is suspended just as many civil laws are superseded by military controls. The plea of "military necessity" is employed to excuse or justify forms of conduct that no right-thinking man or woman would countenance or condone in a normal period. But more serious than distraction and the assumption that "military necessity" suspends the moral law are the lapse of standards and the loss of ideals that always come with war and that war projects into postwar modes of life. The First World War was followed by a period of moral bewilderment and ethical disintegration that seriously threatened every code of conduct—personal, family, and social. The Second World War, every symptom indicates, will be followed by even greater moral confusion and a graver ethical collapse.

Let us consider first the simpler questions that arise on this level. "Our mother is very ill. Do you think we should write our brother her true condition?" This question is one of the most frequent. The military authorities, we know, urge families not to write disturbing letters to men in camps and across the seas. They believe that to the degree that a man is concerned about his family, to that degree he is weakened as a soldier. This may be true. But, on the other hand, the soldier may and probably does feel that he is entitled to know the truth. To know the truth and to bear the truth bravely are or should be a part of the training of the men in camps as well as in civilian life. "Do you think I should visit my husband in camp? Should I

take the baby with me? My parents think I should not go and are trying to dissuade me." It is natural for a young woman to want to see her husband and for a man to see his child. But in addition to these natural desires we must not lose sight of other elements that enter into the problem. Can the young woman afford to make the trip? What are the transportation facilities and the accommodations near the camp? Would it be safe to take a young baby on such a trip and to such a place? These trips, we find, are seldom satisfactory, and we also discover that some young mothers are exhausting themselves and endangering their children in traveling from camp to camp as the husband is moved from station to station. For the mother to imperil her own health and make it more difficult for her to take care of her child in time of war is surely both unwise and wrong.

"Should we have a baby in wartime?" This is not a medical or social but an ethical question and one that millions of men and women find they must answer. The rapid increase in the birth rate during the first year of the war cannot be accepted as the conviction of couples that the birth of a baby in time of war is wise and right. For many couples agreed to have a baby only in the hope that the baby would save the man from the draft. Now that this hope is ended, the problem can be considered without prejudice. There is no doubt that many men and women feel they should have a baby even in the midst of war. The baby is a comfort to the mother and a distant source of joy to the father. No matter what happens to the father, the mother will have the child to sustain her. This is the way these men and women argue. But there are others who believe that the child becomes not a comfort but a burden to the mother. The mother may not be able to take the proper care of

the child; the mother may find on the man's return that she has an invalid or a crippled husband to take care of as well as the child. The answer to this question, "Should we have a baby?" is not found primarily in what the woman wants or in what the man wants. It is found primarily in the answer to another question, "Is it well for the baby?" This is the question that the couple must consider with the counselor.

One young woman was seriously disturbed over a question that must trouble many women in these times. "Should I go out with other men while my husband is away?" This young woman liked to go to concerts and theaters and dances. These forms of pleasure and entertainment had been a part of her life, and she missed them greatly. She realized, however, that her husband was undergoing severe training, that he was suffering many hardships, and that he would be risking his life soon in defense of his home and his country. It seemed to her a form of disloyalty to enjoy her own life in his absence. "What do you think your husband would want you to do?" the counselor asked. "I am not sure. I think my husband would want me to enjoy myself." "But would he be disturbed if he knew that you were going out with other men, even with men that he knew?" "I am afraid he would. He was always a little uneasy when I talked to other men, even when he was here." This young woman really wanted to live her normal life in wartime. But who can possibly do that? War means a change in our ways of life as truly as it means a change in methods of manufacture and the production of commodities. When a whole country organizes for war, every individual must reorganize his and her life; otherwise, there will be conflict both within and without. This includes the woman at home as well as the man in the armed forces.



Much more serious are the problems that involve chastity and fidelity. "I am heartbroken over my daughter. Virtue that meant so much to me and my parents seems to mean nothing whatever to her." This woman stated a tragic truth. An increasing number of young girls all over the country now scoff at the code of morals that their parents regarded as sacred and precious. They think it modern and sophisticated and even patriotic to surrender themselves to soldiers and sailors and even to civilians; they feel no shame in conduct that an older generation regarded as shameless and inexcusable. There is not much that a counselor can do to console the mothers of these young girls. It may be possible to point out to the young girls the dangers of venereal disease, the frightful hazards of abortion, the almost inevitable descent from promiscuous relations to the evil of prostitution. But these cautions may come too late and be altogether ineffective. The fact is that this generation of young girls have never learned the meaning of discipline, of self-control, of the mastery of impulses. They have grown up in an atmosphere untouched by the ideals and the sanctities of life. They have never understood that there are some things in life that are holy and that to desecrate the holy is to invoke spiritual disaster. Redemption may not be impossible, but it is exceedingly difficult even for the ablest and the wisest of counselors.

There is no doubt whatever, we now realize, that many women are deeply disturbed by the fear that their husbands are associating with other women in other parts of the country or in other lands. "I cannot rid myself of the suspicion that my husband is not faithful to me as I am faithful to him. It haunts me constantly." It is not improbable, too, that some husbands may at times also be a little uneasy knowing

the temptations that surround women in time of war. But even more serious than the suspicions and the fears is the fact that husbands and wives are now separated from each other for months and years and that men are associating with other women, men who in peace-time would never have thought of other women for a moment. The danger is that these men will describe their conduct not as infidelity but as nothing more than "physical release." Yet the outcome will be a lowering of the ideal of fidelity and an increase in unfaithfulness. What happens to marriage and marriage relationships in this war period and the period to follow the war will depend in largest measure upon the women. If the women will maintain themselves upon a high level of conduct, if they will cherish as inviolable the ideal of fidelity, if they will preserve untarnished the sanctity of married life, their marriage will survive. The temple that they guard must be so pure in spirit that those who reenter its precincts will themselves be purified.

*Part III*  
COUNSELING IN PRACTICE

CHAPTER 16  
THE CONSULTATION CENTER

ORGANIZATION

A study of marriage and family counseling centers in the United States at the present time reveals many differences in the form of organization, in methods of administration, in the composition and equipment of the staff, and in the program of service. This is what one would expect. For marriage and family counseling is still in the first stage of its development. In every community there have always been men and women who have been sought out by others and who have given what advice and guidance they could as a result of their experience and understanding of life. In every profession, also, there have been men and women who have been consulted by those in distress and who have out of their training, experience, and special equipment been able to counsel and direct others in the solution of their marital problems. In truth, many ministers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and social workers have made counseling an avocation. Marriage and family counseling as a professional program and the establishment of consultation centers could not develop as scientific procedures, however, until the social scientists had laid the foundation by their studies of marriage and family relation-

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ships. As soon as it became clear through the social studies that estrangements, separations, and divorces were due to ascertainable causes and to conditions that could be controlled, men and women in different parts of the country, deeply interested in the preservation of marriage and the protection of the family, engaged in a series of experimental programs, and these in turn led to the establishment of marriage and family counseling either as a part of the program of an organized agency or as an independent organization.

In some communities the consultation center has grown out of the experiences of a maternal health organization, as in the case of the Maternal Health Association in Cleveland. In other communities the consultation center has developed out of a family welfare agency that has been engaged in family case work, as in the case of the Consultation Center associated with the Jewish Social Service Association of New York. In still other communities the consultation center has emerged as a joint enterprise, as in the case of the Council of Churches and Family Consultation Service of Cincinnati. In still other communities the consultation center has naturally evolved out of a program of child study and parent education, as in the case of the Child Study Association of New York and the Association for Family Living of Chicago. In a few instances the consultation center has been born within an educational institution and owes its being to the concern of educators with their graduates, as in the case of the Merrill-Palmer School of Detroit. In only a few instances has the consultation-center program developed out of the experiences of religious organizations and their endeavor to develop community programs, as in the case of the Community Church and the Free Synagogue of New York. In still fewer cases has

the consultation center been established as an independent organization, as in the case of the American Institute of Family Relations of Los Angeles, which began its work in 1930, and in the case of the Marriage Counsel of Philadelphia, which was founded in 1932. One must therefore necessarily conclude that the marriage and family consultation center is still in the experimental and formative stage.

In those communities in which marriage and family counseling is only a part of a larger program maintained by a community organization the work of the consultation center is supervised and developed by a committee of the organization with which the work is associated. This committee is responsible for the development of the program, but it is not independent and autonomous; it can function only as a committee of the larger organization and possesses only such powers as are delegated to it and such funds as are allotted for the service. In some instances the marriage and family counseling program which began as a minor part of the larger organization has in spite of all limitations and disadvantages expanded into a major activity. This is due to wise and progressive social planning and is an evidence of the foresight and vision of the men and women who maintain and develop the community organization. The disadvantage of this form of organization, however, is that the work may be regarded as secondary to the larger program, and to this degree it will be limited both in available funds and in scope of activity. It may also happen as in some communities that the committee in charge of the work of marriage and family counseling may not always have the full and wholehearted support and cooperation of the trustees of the larger organization. Not all trustees of social agencies have come to understand the need for marriage and family counseling

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in community life. It is also true that the committee in charge of the marriage and family counseling program may even find itself in competition with other committees of the parent organization. Committees are jealous of their own program, and competition unfortunately leads to conflict.

In other consultation centers the marriage and family counseling program is under the supervision of a joint committee composed of members of two or more organizations interested and active in sponsoring and developing this new venture. This form of organization also has serious limitations and disadvantages. A joint committee is composed of members of different organizations, and, because the members represent different organizations, they do not feel free to act without the full support of the organizations with which they are affiliated. For example, the members who represent a church body feel primarily responsible to the church; and the members who represent a family welfare organization feel primarily responsible to the family welfare organization; and the members that represent a community center feel primarily responsible to the community center. Whenever an important problem arises for committee action, the members feel that they must "report back." For example, contraception is a legitimate and necessary part of a marriage and family counseling program. Contraception, however, may be approved by the members of the board of the community center and the members of the family welfare organization but not by the members of the board of the church. A few members on the board of one organization, therefore, may in this manner impede and even imperil the development of the program of marriage and family counseling. This makes it utterly impossible for the joint committee to plan and move and act with the freedom that is

necessary for the advancement of a progressive community enterprise.

In a few consultation centers the committee in charge is an advisory body rather than a supervisory board. Its chief function and purpose are not to direct and control the program but to give status and prestige to the consultation center. It is therefore composed of men and women who are well known in the community and whose standing commands confidence and invites contributions. The great disadvantage of this form of organization is the fact that the members of the committee, being advisory, do not feel directly responsible for the development of the program. The direction and development are left to the members of the staff, and the danger is that the development will take place without consultation with the members of the advisory committee and that the members of the committee will know little of what is actually accomplished. Unless men and women take an active interest in the program of work with which they are associated, unless they are charged with responsibility for its progress, unless they are in close personal contact with the work that is being done, they may and usually will lose interest in the work itself. This form of organization is, it is evident, unfair to the members of the staff, to the advisory committee, and to the community that is served. In fact, it may and does happen that the advisory committee becomes not only a committee whose advice is not sought but a committee whose very existence is often ignored. Sooner or later, however, the members of the advisory committee will awaken to the fact that no matter under what title they serve, the community holds them responsible for the work to which they have given their name and their support.

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All forms of organization are at the present time tentative and experimental. But the one that seems to insure the largest measure of independence places the program of the consultation service in charge of an autonomous and independent committee. This committee is called into being for the sole purpose of developing the consultation center and is charged with full responsibility for its advancement. This independent and autonomous committee is usually invited to serve by some man or woman in the community who becomes deeply interested in marriage and family counseling and who awakens other men and women to the existence of the need and the necessity of a program. In the organization of a committee of this character it is wisest to invite men and women who are interested in the different aspects of marriage and family life and who are or have been associated with agencies in the community that are concerned with the safeguarding of the family and education for marriage. These men and women do not and should not represent the agencies with which they are associated, but their association and experience in the field of health or education or family welfare or religion will be of great service in the progress of this new enterprise. It is important that the members of this committee be men and women who are free to give their time, their energy, and their enthusiasm to a new and promising project. It happens not infrequently that there are men and women in the community who are eager to disassociate themselves from long-established and stereotyped organizations and to engage in experimental and pioneering social ventures. These are the men and women who prove most serviceable.

Every consultation center should be legally organized in accordance with the law of the state. Each state has



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its own laws of incorporation, and it is important that the consultation center be incorporated under the right law. If it is possible to incorporate the consultation center as an educational agency that will function under the State Department of Education or as a welfare agency that will operate under the Department of Social Welfare of the state, this will give the center a sanction and authority both of which are important in the eyes of the community. This will also place the center under the jurisdiction of the state and make the center subject to state supervision and control. It must be remembered that the consultation center is more than a membership organization. In all centers it is important to limit the program in accordance with the incorporation papers and the law under which it is incorporated. Some consultation centers have come into conflict with the law when they have unintentionally but inadvisably engaged in activities that are described legitimately and legally as medical. These activities must be reserved for agencies that are incorporated for medical purposes. To have the work questioned on medical grounds, as may be done by those who do not favor the program of marriage and family counseling, is damaging to the work as a whole and to the movement. The consultation center is essentially an educational institution, but its activities may reasonably expand into the welfare field. This fact must be kept in mind in stating the purpose of the center in the papers of incorporation.

The committee in charge or the trustees or the board of directors should meet at least once a month. At these meetings the members of the board should concern themselves not only with income and expenditures but with matters of policy. In fact, it is much wiser for the board of directors to appoint a finance committee who will

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charge themselves with the immediate responsibility of securing the funds for the work and of supervising the expenditures. This will leave the board as a whole free to discuss the program and the progress of the movement. At every board meeting reports should be presented covering the work that has been done during the past month, and in addition recommendations should be carefully prepared concerning needs that develop and changes that should be made. These reports should be prepared by those who are directly in charge of the work, and the recommendations should be made by those who are competent to speak of the program with understanding and authority. It is always advisable to discuss recommendations with the officers of the board in advance. It often happens that recommendations are formulated as a result of long experience and much thought and careful planning. It is therefore unfair to expect all the members of the board immediately to accept recommendations without some preliminary preparation and discussion. In fact, it must be remembered that the members of a board often need to be educated and that it may take weeks and months to educate a majority of the members of a board to a full understanding and appreciation of a recommendation. Only the inexperienced will be impatient.

The board of trustees and the finance committee will discover that the funds for the consultation center can come only in small part from clients. It is therefore necessary to seek other sources of support. In communities in which the consultation center is associated with or a part of other organizations it is possible for these other organizations to make a special appeal for the marriage and family counseling service or to increase their income by featuring this service as a part of their program. In communities in which the consultation

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service functions as an independent and autonomous organization it is necessary to build up a membership of men and women whose contributions will assure adequate support. The degree to which this can be achieved will depend no doubt upon the stage of social development of the community itself. Some communities are fully aware of the importance of the family as the basic social institution and are gravely concerned over the dangers that threaten the family in times of stress. In other communities it may be necessary to appeal to a few generous-minded individuals or to foundations for support. A number of foundations have granted sums of money to organizations developing child study and parent education and may now be persuaded to take the next step to grant funds for the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family. It is important to select only those foundations for appeal that are interested and active in the field of social problems. These can be found in two books: "American Foundations and Their Fields," by Raymond Rich; and "American Foundations for Social Welfare," issued by the Russell Sage Foundation, Library Publication 3.

### ADMINISTRATION

The location of the consultation center is a matter of importance and should be carefully considered. The office should be so located as to be readily accessible to the group of men and women that the consultation center is organized to serve. If the center is to serve the whole community, the office should be somewhere near the center of the city. If the consultation center means to restrict itself to a limited group within the population or to a certain area of the community, then the office should be located in the section of the city in which the group lives or works. Another matter that is important

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is the number of rooms. There should be a sufficient number of rooms to insure privacy. Men and women feel some embarrassment even when they meet in a doctor's office; they feel more embarrassment when they meet in the office of a psychiatrist, and psychiatrists therefore endeavor to avoid the meeting; many feel still greater embarrassment when they meet in a marriage and family consultation center. They do not mind discussing with others the problems of their children; but they do not want others to know of family difficulties and marital dissensions. The best arrangement is a three-room suite with a reception room, a waiting room, and a consultation room. This arrangement permits the presence of three clients if necessary without the clients coming in contact with each other, that is, one in the reception room, one in the waiting room, and one in the consultation room. The exit from the consultation room should be into the hall that leads away from the suite. This will make it unnecessary for the clients to pass through the waiting room and the reception room in leaving the consultation room.

The furnishings of the rooms are another matter that should be carefully considered. Clients react unconsciously to the furnishing, the environment, the atmosphere in the consultation center. The spirit of the place should be one of friendliness and should encourage confidence and even confession. It is therefore necessary to select furnishings that will be pleasant and homelike and that are designed to make the client feel at ease. Desks, tables, chairs, pictures, books, pamphlets, periodicals, even curtains and flower stands should all be considered with the client in mind and in accordance with the spirit of the consultation center. An uncomfortable chair makes it impossible for the client to feel comfortable and places him or her at a disadvantage.

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A consultation center, it must be emphasized, is not a business office, nor is it a clinic. Business equipment and atmosphere are a discouragement to any client who comes for consultation. The presence of clinical apparatus may change the whole picture of the place. The very term "marriage clinic" should be discarded, and every suggestion and association of the term "clinic" should be eliminated as well. These facts must be kept in mind especially when the consultation center is in the same building with or a part of another organization such as a maternal health center or a family welfare organization or even a religious institution. A properly furnished suite relieves the tension that most men and women feel when they come for an interview and encourages them to relax both in body and mind and to think and feel and speak with freedom.

The hours of consultation should also be carefully planned. The center should be open at such times as will serve the clients and meet their needs. In other words, the consultation center should be open during the hours when it is most convenient for the clients to come. Many men and women are busy at work during the day, and many women are busy at home in the morning. It is therefore necessary to arrange consultation hours late in the afternoon or in the evening. This is especially true when it is necessary to see both the man and the woman together. Many consultation centers now recognize this fact and have evening hours at least once or twice a week. Every consultation should be carefully scheduled so that clients may not be compelled to wait an undue length of time. There are some men and women who should rest for a few moments in the waiting room in order that their excitement and agitation may subside. But for some men and women any wait is intolerable. Their impatience increases

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with every moment that passes. The receptionist if correctly trained will know how to care for each case that comes. It is also wise to schedule the consultations in such a way as to leave an interval of a few moments after each session. This interval is needed for the making of notes for the record, and it is also needed because it is exceedingly difficult for any consultant to pass from one case to another without a carry-over of impression and attitude and manner. Some consultants are fully aware of this fact and insist upon a few moments between consultations in order to recover poise and to receive the next client with fresh interest, clear mind, and undisturbed emotions.

The fee to be charged clients is often a matter of debate. Perhaps the wisest policy is to arrange the fee in accordance with the ability of the client. In other words, there must be a sliding scale for the initial consultation, for subsequent appointments, and for the service of experts. The initial fee in consultation centers at present runs from \$1 to \$10, and the fees for subsequent visits from \$1 to \$5. If the pre-marital conference includes a medical examination, the cost of this examination should be included within the fee charged, though in some centers a separate charge is made. One way of determining the fee to be charged a client is to ascertain the approximate income of a man or woman or family. Another way is to consider the neighborhood in which the client lives and the approximate rent that is paid. There is no reason why men and women who are in a position to pay a reasonable fee should not be encouraged to do so, and most clients will wish to make some contribution to the program in return for the service they receive. They realize that they are paying not only for the time that they consume but for the training and experience and counsel they seek.

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Marriage and family counseling is a highly specialized service and must take its place on the same level with other professions. Eventually, men and women will learn to regard marriage and family counseling in the same way in which they now regard dental and medical and psychiatric and legal service.

A budget to cover the consultation center should be prepared by the finance committee and the director at the beginning of every fiscal year. This budget should show clearly the amount needed for each item, including rent, salaries, stationery, postage, telephone, and incidentals; and the budget should also state the sources of income and the amount anticipated from each source. In some instances it may be advisable to prepare two budgets, a minimum budget that will show the least amount that is needed for a minimum program of service, and another budget that is required to meet developments in an adequate manner. Once the budget is presented by the finance committee and adopted by the board, it should govern the administrative staff, and no change should be made without the consent of the finance committee. It is important also to install a carefully considered bookkeeping system and to keep accurate account of both income and expenditure from month to month. The simplest efficient plan is a voucher system. A voucher should be signed by the chairman of the finance committee for every expenditure, and checks should be drawn by the treasurer only upon the presentation of the signed voucher. The voucher should be made out and signed by the chairman of the finance committee only upon receipt of bills or memoranda approved by the director. Boards of trustees, composed in part of businessmen and women, and community chests and foundations that subsidize organizations always appreciate a bookkeeping system and a budgetary

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policy that clearly indicate needs, income, and expenditures. A report upon income and expenditure and needs should, it is evident, be presented at each monthly meeting of the board. This should not be allowed to become a matter of routine but should be made a matter of information and a basis for discussion.

The record system of the consultation center is still in process of development. Different centers are experimenting with modifications of record systems employed in other types of organizations. The simplest system at present consists of an index card and a folder for each case. The index card is made out by the receptionist and contains only sufficient facts to identify the client, that is, the name, address, telephone number, and the code number of the folder. The folder contains a face sheet and a running history. The face sheet gives an outline picture including, one, the chief facts concerning the individual client, that is, full name, place and date of birth, occupation, education, height, weight, general appearance; two, the chief facts concerning the members of the family including the relationship of each member and income; three, the chief facts concerning the home including the address, length of time at permanent address, number of rooms, description of furnishings and conveniences; and, four, the names and addresses of men and women who are interested in the client and from whom references can be secured. The running history is a record of the case including the diagnosis, the plan of treatment, the results achieved, the changes noted in the client, the changes that are made in the diagnosis and the plan of treatment, and a summary of each interview. In addition to the face sheet and the running history the folder should also contain a record of the examination made by the expert. Some men and women as a result of their experience with



doctors and lawyers are accustomed to have notes taken in their presence; but there are some men and women, on the other hand, who feel uneasy when notes are made and forms filled out in their presence. In this matter the counselor must exercise caution and discretion. It is evident that all records should be regarded as confidential and should be accessible only to the consultant and the secretary.

A program of publicity or community interpretation is a necessary part of the consultation-center administration. The community must be made acquainted with the existence of the consultation center and the service it is equipped to render. Well-timed, well-placed, and well-prepared publicity will do much to bring the program to the attention of the community and to interest and attract those whom the consultation center can serve as well as those who can serve the consultation center. In every community there is a member who has some training and experience in publicity work or public relations programs and who can serve as chairman of a committee. This committee will understand how to prepare releases for the press, leaflets for distribution, and pamphlets for meetings. Announcements can also and should be made through various agencies such as religious organizations, fraternal societies, civic agencies, and the meetings of various groups that are held from month to month. The chairman of the committee may without embarrassment ask for a few moments in which to present the program of the consultation center whenever an important meeting is held in the community. Every opportunity that will make the public acquainted fully with the consultation center and its program should be watched and welcomed. A publicity program wisely prepared and conducted must not be viewed as an advertisement; it is, in fact, a process of education.

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Every community needs to be educated in the matter of marriage and family counseling and can best be educated through a publicity program that will employ human material. The citation of cases is the most effective form of publicity when vividly presented and wisely placed.

A study of the sources from which clients come indicates that the sources differ in different communities. If the publicity program is effective, men and women will telephone and come to the consultation center as a result of what they learn through this medium. Ministers, doctors, and lawyers to whom men and women go for information and guidance together constitute one of the most important sources for marriage and family counseling clients. It is therefore most advisable to make the men and women of these professions thoroughly acquainted with the program of the consultation center. This can be done through meeting with ministers' associations, medical societies, and lawyers' groups. As a rule members of these professions will welcome an agency that is prepared to supplement their own activities in a scientific and expert manner. Parent-teachers associations and the faculties of schools and colleges also serve as sources. Many teachers and especially principals and assistant principals in public schools and high schools learn of problems that develop in the families of their children and are in a position to refer these families to the consultation center. The deans and faculty members of colleges often act as counselors in the cases that come to them but are not trained for marriage and counseling service. They therefore should be encouraged to refer their students and the families of students to the consultation center for the discussion of the more serious problems that they discover. The family welfare associations, children's courts, and family courts and labor groups likewise

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should be in contact with the consultation center, for the consultation center with its trained and experienced and unofficial staff can often succeed where the official agencies fail.

### STAFF

It is common knowledge that many men and women whose major interests and activities lie in other fields also engage in marriage and family counseling from time to time. Physicians as a rule become intimately acquainted with the families they serve and are often consulted by their patients when crises develop in family life and family relationships. This is especially true when the cause of the trouble seems to arise out of some physical weakness or defect or disease or sexual maladjustment. It is natural for families to consult their physicians in these cases; but the danger is that the true cause of the trouble may not be biological. Psychiatrists, it is well known, are again and again consulted in the matter of marriage and family relationships. In truth, there are probably few cases in charge of psychiatrists that do not involve marriage and family life. It is indeed often impossible to understand the patient without a knowledge of the patient's family. The psychiatrist, however, may concentrate so directly upon the psychical symptoms that conditions and causes in other areas may not be given their correct value and significance. Lawyers likewise become intimately acquainted with the affairs of their clients and with the problems that their clients face in family life. For this reason they are often consulted in time of difficulty and distress. In some cases the chief cause of trouble is disagreement over the disposition of property or dissension due to a misunderstanding of rights and responsibilities. But it may be that the disagreement

and the dissension whether between husband and wife or parents and children have another and a deeper cause than that the lawyer unacquainted with all the facts may not discover.

Teachers and deans in colleges and universities are accustomed to counseling service, and they frequently find that the disturbances that appear in the students cannot be understood without studying the family background. The student cannot be isolated from the family of which he or she is a part. Teachers are therefore often compelled to include within their program marriage problems and family relationships. Many social workers also discover in the course of their care of families that they cannot limit themselves to health and economic and recreational and vocational needs. Inevitably they must also deal with the problems of marriage and family relationships. In fact, social work has now advanced to the stage where family counseling is recognized as a necessary and important part of family case work. Maladjustments within the family, social workers now realize, are a major cause of family distress. Ministers of religion for generations have aided the members of their congregation and the community in the solution of marriage and family problems. This service which has been more or less a minor rather than a major activity is now growing in importance. In many seminaries courses are given on marriage and the family and the problems of married life and family relationships. It is perhaps not too much to say that pastoral service is now developing into personal and marriage and family counseling. This is a marked advance and lifts pastoral work to a scientific procedure.

In different communities a number of men and women are now engaged in marriage and family counseling, not as an incidental part of their profession but as an

avowed vocation. In some instances they give the whole of their time of this service, in other instances only a part of their time. The interesting fact is that marriage and family counselors whether they give part time or whole time to the service come out of different fields and have different backgrounds. Some come out of the field of law, some out of the field of medicine, some out of the field of nursing, some out of the field of psychology and psychiatry, some out of home economics, some out of teaching, some out of social work, and some out of the ministry. It is inevitable that these men and women should in the beginning see the cases that come to them in terms of their own interests and training and experience and that they should employ the techniques to which they are accustomed and in which they are skilled. In other words, to use a current phrase, many counselors today are conditioned by their background and predisposed by their predilections. In the course of time, however, they come to recognize the dangers involved in the limitations of their own discipline and endeavor to enlarge both their equipment and outlook upon the problems of marriage and the family. They realize that marriage and family counseling has become a specialized field of work and that this work should be assumed only by those who are adequately equipped. The degree to which they succeed in the service they render depends in large part upon their conception of family counseling and the material that must be mastered and the new methods it is necessary to employ.

It is now clear to those who are specializing in the field of marriage and family counseling that no one person is competent to deal expertly with every type of case that comes for consultation and guidance and with every problem. For no one person can have expert training and experience in all the fields in which problems

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arise in marriage and family life. These problems, we now know, are sometimes legal in character, sometimes economic, sometimes medical, sometimes psychiatric, sometimes ethical. In addition, the problems are seldom simple; they are as a rule complex, that is, composed of a number of elements and factors. In the course of time a curriculum will be developed that will prepare men and women more adequately for marriage and family counseling. In order to do this the curriculum will include courses that will make marriage and family counselors acquainted with the different fields in which problems arise and the methods that are employed in dealing with the problems that appear in different areas or on different levels. In other words, the marriage and family counselor will become acquainted with the different professional fields and with the different disciplines. He or she may do what some undertake to do today, major in one of these fields; but all counselors will also minor in all the other fields. A general diagnostician may be a specialist in some one field of medicine; for example, he may be an internist; but this general diagnostician knows enough of other divisions of the science and the practice of medicine to recognize the special problems that appear, and he knows also where to send patients for a correct diagnosis and for proper treatment.

It is therefore advisable for a consultation center to have as a member of the staff a counselor who can serve as the diagnostician or general consultant. The first interview of every client should be with the general consultant. The duty of the general consultant is to study the man or woman or couple that comes for consultation, to assemble the material that is necessary or possible, to determine the major cause of distress, in other words, to make the diagnosis on the basis of

the evidence available. The assembling of the evidence may require more than one interview and usually requires also contact with other members of the family or with men and women who are acquainted with the facts of the case. The diagnosis made by the general consultant must necessarily be tentative and may be modified or changed completely as new evidence appears and the case develops. In order to serve as general consultant it is imperative that this member of the staff be acquainted with the different aspects of marriage and with the problems and techniques of family counseling. But more important even than a knowledge of the different aspects of marriage and the different areas in which distress develops and the principles of diagnosis and methods of treatment is the personality of the consultant. Unless the personality of the consultant is such as to encourage confidence and to enlist cooperation, unless the consultant is able to express an active interest in the problem, to radiate warmth, to impress the man and woman who come for guidance with a sense of competency and authority, little can be accomplished. In truth, the success of the consultation center will depend in greatest measure upon the personality of the consultant.

In addition to the general consultant there should be a group of experts to whom special problems can be referred. This group of experts may be a part of the staff of the consultation center, or the group may be associated with other agencies in the community, or the group may be composed of men and women in the different professions who agree to accept cases referred by the center. At the present time all three plans are in operation in different parts of the country. No matter which plan is adopted, the group of experts should include a lawyer who is socially minded and who is

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interested in the human aspects of domestic relations problems and in maintaining the family intact; there should be a home economist who not only possesses a theoretical knowledge of home economics but also has training and experience in housekeeping and homemaking and who understands the problems that may arise in this field of family relationships; there should be a physician who is fully aware of the ways in which biological conditions in husband or wife affect marriage and family life and who is concerned with maintaining family organization and family integrity; there should be a psychologist and a psychiatrist who are not merely specialists in their own subjects but who have a full appreciation of the ways in which psychological factors enter into marriage and family relationships and who also understand the limitations of their own field of work; and there should be a minister or teacher of ethics who has studied the family and family problems in our time and who is keenly conscious of the religious, ethical, and spiritual ideals that should govern family relationships.

These experts must not only be able to diagnose the case, that is, discover the cause of distress; they must also know how to treat the trouble. They not only must be able to recognize the defect or the disease that causes the maladjustment but must be able to employ skillfully the techniques that are needed to correct the condition that serves as a cause. Nothing will discourage a man or woman or couple more than to suspect that the expert knows enough to determine the cause but is not sufficiently experienced to treat it. The emphasis, in fact, must in all cases be upon treatment and upon progress. Treatment, of course, means calling into action the latent resources of the individual, the building up of inward powers, the employment of the hygienic



rather than the drug method of treatment. But it must not be forgotten that in many cases the client is so exhausted or so confused that counseling must include guidance and direction. It would be a strange form of psychotherapy that would expect a man or woman to go north or south, right or left, when he or she has lost the compass or is too bewildered to know how to read the compass correctly. It also must be remembered that a plan of treatment includes not merely what is discovered within the individual but all the factors that are discovered in exploring the different circles of experience. To omit the factors outside the individual is to end in failure and futility.

The consultation center must have a director who is charged with the responsibility of directing and developing the program. The director may be and usually is the general consultant. In addition to training and experience in the field of marriage and family counseling the director must also have, it is evident, training and experience in administrative methods and executive service. This is a combination of qualities and qualifications not always easy to secure, but unless a person with executive and administrative ability is placed in control of the consultation center, many mistakes will be made and mismanagement must inevitably follow. The director should be in close contact with the officers and members of the board. Consultation with officers and members is important not only because the members of the board and the officers feel that they want to be consulted but also because they are selected for their competence in giving counsel. The officers and members of the board and the director together should formulate the policy of the center, and the director should be entrusted with the responsibility to develop the policy into a program. This means that the director must

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possess authority that is commensurate with responsibility. In other words, the director must have latitude and freedom. The director must also be a person who is able to command the respect of the staff of experts and to cooperate with them in the furtherance of the program of the center. This means that the director must possess not only executive and administrative ability but patience and tact and all the resourcefulness that is required in organizing a staff of experts and in collaborating with men and women who are themselves authorities in their respective fields.

In addition to the director it is important to have a secretary who is not merely a typist and a stenographer. The secretary should be engaged for full time and be competent to serve as a receptionist, that is, as one who can properly receive and welcome the clients. The voice and manner and even the dress as well as the personality of the secretary are most important because of the contact over the telephone and the contact in person at the office. The wrong kind of secretary can do much to discourage and alienate clients and to discredit the consultation center. The right kind of secretary can do much to encourage clients, to win the confidence of men and women, and to establish the consultation center in the community. A consultation center, it must be remembered, is not a business office, and the manner of the secretary or receptionist must not be too businesslike. It must not be forgotten that men and women who come to a consultation center come because they are in doubt or in distress, and frequently they are in a state of mental excitement and emotional turmoil. The secretary if properly trained will understand the needs of these men and women and will know how to meet the needs in a preliminary and initial contact. As far as is consistent with professional ethics, the

secretary should be in the confidence of the director and should know something of the men and women who come to the consultation center. If the facts are dictated to her for the records in each case, she will, of course, be acquainted with them. But this does not mean that she should act as if she knew each intimately. The secretary must act with discretion and reticence as well as with intelligence and sympathy.

Should the staff be salaried or volunteer? This is one of the difficult and debatable questions, and the answer must depend in part upon the income and ability of the organization to compensate those who serve the center. There seems no doubt that the general consultant should be a salaried member of the staff and should be free to devote full time to the development of the program. This will insure adequate service whenever service is needed. The other members of the staff in some centers serve part time and are paid for part-time service. In other centers the staff of experts accept cases on an individual basis and charge the client whatever the client can afford to pay. In still other centers the experts serve as volunteers, as do doctors in hospitals and dispensaries. It is not fair, however, to ask experts in any field to serve as volunteers in the cases of clients who are able to afford a fee. The expert has only his or her knowledge and expertness and time to invest and is entitled to a full and reasonable compensation. It is possible that a member of the staff may have a fixed income of his or her own and for this reason may feel free to give expert service without compensation. A teacher in a college or a minister in a large congregation may have a salary sufficiently large to make it possible for him or her to serve as a consultant or as an expert on a part-time basis or altogether as a volunteer. In urban communities it is possible for the staff of experts

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to meet clients at the consultation center or in their own offices; but in rural districts it is as a rule impossible for the clients to visit the experts in their own offices, especially when the client lives at a distance.

### PROGRAM OF WORK

As consultation centers expand, they develop a program of work that includes many different forms of service. One form of service is the pre-marital conference or *marriage counseling*. This service is designed to meet the needs of young people who are about to be married or who have married recently. These young men and women realize that preparation for marriage is now necessary; but their understanding of preparation for marriage is limited largely to an acquaintance with sex hygiene and the subject of reproduction. The full program of marriage counseling includes much more than this. It includes a discussion of all the aspects of marriage as we have now come to understand them—the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, and the ethical. It is important for young people who are about to be married to understand something of the legal implications of the marriage contract, something of the economic basis on which marriage must rest, something of the biological foundations on which they must build, something of the psychological factors that enter into marriage, and also something of the ethical ideals that should guide them in the cultivation of their marriage and family relationships. The practice of the marriage counselor, however, is not the same in all consultation centers. In only a few does the counselor even attempt at the present time to explore with the young couple the full meaning of marriage and to aid them to understand and to appreciate the foundations on

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which marriage must rest in our time and the difference between the old foundations and the new.

The initial step in most consultation centers is to discuss with the young man and the young woman or both the problems that seem to vex them. This is undoubtedly the proper procedure. The more intelligent young people grow, the more they become aware of the complexities of the marriage relationship and the more they desire to discuss these complexities as they arise during their courtship and engagement period and the early years of married life. But young people often misunderstand the nature of their own problems and the area in which these problems arise. It is therefore necessary to include within marriage counseling more than a medical examination and a study of the biological material. In fact, it is wise to assume that the problem or problems that seem urgent to the young people are but an introduction to matters of more importance. It is unusual perhaps to find that any one case presents serious problems in more than one or two areas of married life. But the counselor cannot allow himself or herself to stop with the statement of the young people. An experienced and sensitive counselor will discover through a series of questions and suggestions whether or not there are other problems of which the young people are unaware or which they disguise or conceal. A skilled physician listens to the statement of the patient but proceeds to make his own examination. In marriage counseling it often happens, as it does in medicine, that an examination reveals conditions that are not included within the statement of the client and that contradict the statement itself.

The chief difficulty at present in this program lies in the fact that young people consult the marriage counselor only a short time before their marriage. They do not

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allow sufficient time for the number of conferences necessary to cover all aspects of marriage adequately. The great need today is to educate young people to an understanding of the wisdom of arranging for conferences at least three months in advance of the marriage itself. This length of time will not only assure the opportunity for a series of weekly conferences and discussions; it will also provide for an early physical examination of both young people and the treatment and correction of such conditions as in the judgment of the examining physician would interfere with marriage and married life. Until young people have been educated to come early, the counselor is compelled to resort to the expedient of doing as much as possible in the course of one or two conferences and to supplement these conferences with recommended readings. The young people as a rule will agree to read what is recommended and often will return to discuss the topics of which the pamphlets or books treat. In fact, the best form of marriage counseling is the kind that encourages young people to return to the counselor after marriage, especially when difficulties develop in their marriage relationship. In this way marriage counseling leads directly to and becomes a part of the second form of service.

The second form of service is now known as *family counseling*. Family counseling is organized to meet the needs of men and women who are married and who face problems in their family relationships that they find themselves unable to solve without expert guidance. A study of the work done by consultation centers in different parts of the country reveals the interesting fact that problems differ with the group served and the origin and history of the consultation center itself. In some centers the largest number of problems lies in the biological field; in other centers the largest number lies

in the psychological field; and in some centers the largest number of problems are moral or ethical in character. In some communities the problems are fundamentally economic in character. This is due to the group that is served. In other communities the problems are chiefly medical and are related to sexual maladjustments and to contraceptive procedures. This is largely the result of the fact that from the beginning the consultation center has been known as an agency in the field of sex hygiene, maternal health, or birth control. Very often nothing more is needed than a correct interpretation of the trouble and a dispassionate presentation of the facts. In almost every center, however, the problems arise first of all in the relationship of the husband and the wife. In this relationship many misunderstandings and discords develop which both the husband and the wife may misinterpret and distort. But in many instances the problems that arise between husband and wife cannot be solved without guidance and a reeducation of both the man and the woman. This reeducation, every counselor knows, is a difficult process.

Other problems that are brought to the consultation center develop in the relationship between parents and children. In some consultation centers many cases of this character appear in large part because the consultation center itself is an outgrowth of an organization that has been chiefly concerned with child care or with parent education. In the relationship between parents and children many tensions and conflicts arise as the conditions of life change and young people grow from childhood into adolescence and from adolescence into young manhood and womanhood. Parents and children frequently misunderstand and antagonize each other. If they can be taught to understand each other's attitude, this understanding will at least reduce tension and

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reduce the number of conflicts even though it will not always establish harmonious relationships and solve the problem. Other problems and forms of distress are due to the relationship of husband and wife or children or the whole family to other relatives, that is, to people outside the immediate family circle. This is an area that is not often explored, but it is frequently the source of much disturbance and unhappiness. The counselor, therefore, should always watch for indications and signals. What appears in the distant background may be of far more significance than is evident at the outset. These problems may run the full range from the most simple interference with the relationship between husband and wife or parents and children to the most complicated and subtle forms of outside and remote control.

The technique employed in marriage and family counseling is not the same in all consultation centers. This is due to the fact that some counselors come out of the field of medicine or related services such as public health nursing and naturally employ the methods that they have learned and to which they are accustomed; other counselors come out of the field of psychology and psychiatry and adopt the methods of investigation and study that they have learned in their own sciences; other counselors come out of social work and proceed in accordance with the principles and the practices they have learned and developed in this field of case work. It is not improbable that a new art and a new science will emerge out of the experiences of family counselors; in fact, new techniques are now evolving and taking form. No matter what the form of therapy adopted it is clear that no plan of treatment can be developed without an adequate diagnosis; and it is equally clear that no diagnosis can be adequate unless it is based upon



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all the factors involved in the case of distress. This means that before a diagnosis can be made, it is necessary to assemble all the evidence that is available from all those sources in possession of the evidence that is needed. The time cannot be very distant when the experiences of marriage and family counselors will be pooled and new principles formulated and new practices established.

A number of state committees on marriage and the family have discussed the program of training at different sessions. The National Conference on Family Relations under the leadership of Prof. Ernest W. Burgess has advanced further than any other organization in formulating a curriculum. The session of the National Conference on Family Relations held in Chicago June 18-20, 1944, was devoted almost entirely to this topic. A series of committees was formed to discuss the theme, "Professional Education for Marriage and Family Counseling." One committee discussed education for marriage and family counseling for those who wish to devote their whole time to this program of service; and separate committees discussed the training that should be included within the curriculum of law, medicine, ministry, nursing, social work, and teaching. The report of the committee, of which Prof. Ernest R. Groves was chairman, is so important that it seems advisable to quote it in full:

### PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING<sup>1</sup>

#### I. Marriage counseling, an emerging specialty

##### A. A different type of an ancient service demanded by conditions of modern American life

<sup>1</sup>Prepared for discussion by the Committee on Special Training for Full-time Workers in the Field of Marriage and Family Counseling, for the 1944 meeting of the National Conference on Family Relations, E. R. Groves, Chairman.

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- B. Its development retarded by tradition which:
  - 1. accepts marriage handicaps as unescapable
  - 2. regards them as evidences of the failure of the marriage
  - 3. leads those who desire help to seek it from friends and relatives.
- II. The present counselor has a double task
  - A. To encourage the present trend of our young people both to prevent problems and to gain insight for dealing with them when they arise.
    - a. When marriage counseling becomes well-established and generally accepted as a profession, it is to be expected that this service will be used as, for example, that of the lawyers by the business man, for the purpose of gaining needed insight but without any feeling that this indicates that the marriage is in jeopardy. If no counselor can be assumed to know all the answers to marriage situations, surely it is no indication of incapacity if a husband or wife or both find need of the assistance of a specialist in dealing with some problem that concerns them.
  - B. To demonstrate the advantage of professional counseling over other methods of handling marriage problems.
- III. The training of specialists in marriage counseling will be influenced by the professional experiences of those now giving counsel.
  - A. These men and women have entered the field with different backgrounds.
    - 1. There is at present no specialty prepared to monopolize the training.
    - 2. Marriage covers a wide area of human experience and the causations of its problems are distributed among the specialties that deal factually with human nature.
    - 3. No individual can be a specialist in each of these.
    - 4. Professional counseling requires that the counselor be familiar with this varied and extensive background and avoid being arbitrary, through personal predilection, in limiting diagnosis to the line of causation with which he is most familiar on account of his background.

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- B. Training for marriage counseling should assume and seek to encourage the individual's natural aptitude for counseling.
    - 1. As in surgery, training cannot substitute for this personal disposition.
  - C. Training should reveal and discourage any danger of the individual's using counseling to fulfill a craving to play God to those in trouble.
- IV. The marriage counselor deals with the total personality.
- A. The special problem presented is the focus of attention but not only or necessarily the chief aspect of the situation.
    - 1. The exception to this occurs when some particular information rather than insight is the need of the client.
  - B. The program of training therefore must recognize the most important specialties that interpret the total personality of men and women.
    - 1. The material from the various fields of knowledge should be presented as it relates to marriage and the family; not as an attempt to make the student expert in each of these specialties, but to build the background needed to function as a counselor.
- V. Anthropology. The marriage counselor should be familiar with primitive social life not only because it reveals basic human motivations expressed in folkways, mores, myths, and symbols, but also because it encourages an objective interpretation and evaluation of alien cultural backgrounds. This vicariousness in sharing the personal background of the client is indispensable to counseling.
- VI. Biology. The essential contribution of biological science is an appreciation of the meaning and significance of the human organism. The counselor also should know the facts of human heredity and the eugenic programs now functioning or advocated for the security and the improvement of the race.
- VII. Medicine. In this field there is need of a course given by various specialists with emphasis on: (1) embryology as it reveals the development of sexual structure, (2) endocrinology, especially as it is related to adolescence, fertility, pregnancy and the climacteric, (3) obstetrics, (4) representative health programs of preventive medicine, and (5) available resources for safeguarding and improving the health of communities

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and individuals. In this medical course or by allied instruction there should be discussion of human sexology emphasizing the normal and also giving attention to such abnormal expressions of sex as the counselor is most likely to encounter in his conferences.

- VIII. Law. The counselor has need not only of knowing the principles of domestic law, with special attention to marriage, annulment and divorce, but also for his own security he requires clear understanding of his legal status and liability as a counselor, and of his professional limitations that he may not intrude into the field of the lawyer.
- IX. Psychiatry should add to the background of the counselor knowledge of the mechanisms that influence human conduct, of the theories of leading psycho-analytic schools, and an understanding of the principal mental diseases and their characteristic expressions. The marriage counselor should be prepared to recognize mental abnormalities that indicate the need of the counsel of a psychiatrist.
- X. Psychology. This science furnishes the counselor with an appreciation of the manner in which human personality develops with emphasis on the significance of the formative period of childhood and youth. The student should also be acquainted with the most common tests given by the professional psychologist, that the counselor may send his client for an examination when this appears desirable.
- XI. Sociology should provide a clear picture of the development of American social life and the common social problems of those who marry, become parents, are courting or who have given up the idea of marriage. The significance of class and section as they influence attitudes and behavior should be stressed since the counselor must always be prepared to take these cultural differences into account.
- XII. Economics. Difficulties relating to household finances are so frequently the client's chief problem or an important aspect of it that the counselor needs to be well-acquainted with the resources of home economics for dealing with such incompatibilities. The counselor, whether man or woman, will find it an advantage to have had personal experience in the buying and cooking of food and with housekeeping routine.
- XIII. Religion. The counselor must have a clear conception of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish philosophies of marriage. This material can best be given by a representative of each of

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these faiths. In counseling there is frequent need of appreciating the significance of the basic religious convictions of the clientele.

XIV. Counseling experience. The principles of counseling should be taught with opportunities for diagnosis and treatment of representative cases. This instruction, in preparation for counseling, should make conscious to the student any tendencies he may have toward personal prejudices or generalizations in judging the conduct of others. Candidates for counseling, toward the later part of their study, should be permitted to give counsel in dealing with the simpler problems under the guidance of a professional counselor. Since marriage counseling is developing rapidly as one of the important functions of many social and religious organizations, it would seem that the program for training in marriage counseling should include the working out of some sort of student apprenticeship with such organizations as maintain a well-developed counseling service.

XV. Social work. Indispensable to the program of preparation for domestic counseling is knowledge of the principles of social work, of the technique of case work, and of the resources available to the Counselor through the cooperation of social agencies.

A third type of service developed by consultation centers is the *educational program*. The educational program includes series of lectures, study groups, conferences, and full courses on marriage and family life. This form of service is becoming one of the most important items of organizations interested in the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family. These educational programs are now being arranged for special groups as well as for the general public. Churches and synagogues, neighborhood houses and community centers, fraternal organizations and labor groups all are coming to realize the importance and the value of a program of education for marriage and family life and are requesting consultation centers to aid them in building up series of lectures and in

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organizing study groups and conferences and in directing and conducting complete courses. In some communities the educational program is conducted under the auspices of one organization or institution; in other communities it becomes a joint enterprise. In a few communities organizations, agencies, and institutions interested in marriage and the family are arranging for courses to be given to the members of their staffs by consultation centers. The expert in the consultation center, in other words, becomes a teacher of teachers and in this manner is exercising a widening influence in the development of community programs and in the advancement of community family life.

In addition to lectures, study groups, conferences, and full courses the educational program in some consultation centers also includes the distribution of literature, a circulating library, and radio work. The literature distributed, especially in the form of pamphlets and magazines, is often prepared by the members of the staff and published by the organization. The members of the staff draw upon their experience in the consultation center, and the literature they prepare is realistic and practical and always deals with current problems. Some consultation centers gather together the literature issued by various organizations and include these publications in their reading lists and bibliographies. A number of organizations active in the field of marriage and family life, including the Family Institute of America of Los Angeles, the Association for Family Living of Chicago, and the Child Study Association of New York, are now issuing excellent material. Associated organizations are also publishing pamphlets and magazines that are of great service. Such are the publications of the American Social Hygiene Association, the National Mental Hygiene Committee, and the Planned Parent-

hood Federation of America. Different religious groups, too, are now engaged in preparing and publishing literature in the field of marriage and family life, especially the Commission on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of Churches, the Family Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and the Committee on Marriage, the Family, and the Home of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. All this literature is moderately priced and easily available.

Most consultation centers establish libraries first for the benefit of their staff and then for their clientele and the community. This library as a rule contains important pamphlets that are issued, magazines that are published, and the standard books that appear from time to time on the subject of marriage and the family. The library in some centers is at present somewhat limited, but in other centers it is sufficiently complete to cover the chief aspects of marriage and family life, the history of marriage and the family as a social institution, the problems of marriage and family relationships, the foundations of the family both old and new. A number of consultation centers have arranged to circulate the material in their libraries and to lend out books even to clients at a distance. For this service a nominal charge is made. In a well-organized library a service is also developed to provide groups and institutions with displays of pamphlets, magazines, and books for special meetings. These displays are as a rule arranged in an attractive manner and encourage men and women to attend the meetings to purchase copies. In several communities the consultation centers prepare and distribute lists of selected readings on current problems in marriage and family life. It is unnecessary for the centers to prepare complete bibliographies, for a number

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of standard books on marriage and the family contain good bibliographies, especially the textbooks that are written by sociologists for college classes. One of the most valuable bibliographies is issued annually by *Social Forces* under the direction of Prof. Ernest R. Groves.

Some consultation centers are now organizing radio programs. These programs are prepared by the members of the staff in constant consultation with experts in the field of adult education. They are therefore both informative and authoritative. A special technique, it is recognized, must be adopted in preparing and in presenting a radio program. Men and women are more actively interested in a dramatic presentation of this subject than in lectures or essays. It is important, however, that the dramatic element be so employed as to heighten rather than to lower the subject. Some popular programs that deal with marriage and the family do nothing more than to expose and to exploit human misery. No self-respecting radio corporation would permit a program of this character in the field of law or medicine or science, and there is no reason why these programs in the field of marriage and family life should be countenanced. Programs of this nature do nothing more than to appeal to the morbid curiosity of men and women and mislead the listeners. In every program broadcast, marriage and the family should be treated in a wholesome manner. There are no doubt pathological cases in every field, but most of the problems that arise in marriage and family life are not pathological; they are human experiences that must be faced and understood and wisely interpreted. One function of the radio program sponsored by the consultation center must be to emphasize the fact that it is utterly impossible to diagnose and to treat marriage and family problems in a two-minute interview.



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Through the educational program the consultation center is doing at least three things. In the first place, it is providing lecturers and leaders who because of their training and experience and acquired skills are able to speak on the subject of marriage and the family with full understanding and authority. This is most important in a time when there is danger of amateurs misleading the public. In the second place, the consultation center is able to accumulate case material and community experiences which aid the men and women of the community to understand their own family life in terms of expert procedure. The interpretation that a consultation center can give to community problems is a valuable addition to the interpretation given by other community agencies. In the third place, the consultation center through its educational program makes available to individuals and groups and the community as a whole the studies and findings of social scientists. In other words, the scientific knowledge that is assembled in social science laboratories is through the consultation center and its educational program being extended to larger and larger circles and in this manner is being democratized. Perhaps no greater service could be rendered by the consultation center than to translate into terms intelligible to the great mass of men and women the scientific material that too often is limited to the students and scientists themselves. Every consultation center has discovered that men and women today enroll for educational programs not because they seek a sensational discussion of sex problems but because they are eager to listen to a scientific presentation of current and often serious problems.

A fourth form of service that the consultation center is now developing is a program of *research*. As the weeks and months pass, a consultation center accumulates a

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mass of case material; and the members of the staff not only expand their own experience and deepen their insight but acquire new skills and fashion new techniques. The material that is accumulated is actually source material in the scientific sense, and the studies made of this material often reveal important trends in the family life of communities and the country. The members of the staff of the American Institute of Family Relations cooperated in a preparation of one of the most important pieces of research thus far published, "Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness," by Professor Terman and his associates. The Marriage Counsel in Philadelphia has as a result of its decades of notable experience and service been given a grant with which to conduct a study that will "add to the understanding of those factors which contribute to marital conflict; explore the possibilities in professional services before marriage which might contribute toward constructive marital adjustment; develop reference materials and procedures which would utilize and integrate available knowledge of health to physicians, ministers, counselors, teachers, social workers, lawyers, and others who have contacts with young people considering marriage." It is not improbable that in the very near future men and women trained in social science research will be associated with consultation centers and that the studies they will make will indicate the problems that need to be explored and the paths of development that marriage and family counseling should follow from period to period.

The New York State Conference on Marriage and the Family as a result of its study and experience has come to the conclusion that the responsibility of the state for the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family is not fully recognized. The Committee has therefore prepared a Brief to be submitted to the

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Governor. This Brief may serve as a pattern for committees in other states and is therefore reproduced herewith in full:

### BRIEF ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE

#### I. THE PROBLEM

One of the gravest problems we face in the social field today is the breakdown of marriage and family life. The extent and seriousness of the breakdown is indicated in part by the statistics on divorce gathered by the Federal Government during the last 70 years. In 1867, the first year for which we have accurate statistics, about 10,000 divorces were granted in the United States. In 1940 the total number of divorces granted reached over 300,000. Since 1870 the population of the United States has increased by about 300%; marriages have increased by about 400%; and divorces have increased over 2,000%. A study made by one of the ablest social statisticians proves that out of every 9 marriages existing just before the war in the United States 7 would be dissolved by death and 2 would be disrupted by divorce. This means that  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the families in the United States are doomed to disorganization.

These statistics on divorce however give only a partial picture of conditions. To the number of divorces we must add the number of separations, legal and voluntary; the number of desertions that take place from year to year; the number of estrangements in which husband and wife are actually alienated from each other but continue to live in the same house because of their children or social pressure. For cases of estrangement, desertion, and separation that do not end in divorce there are no written records or statistics. But the experience of ministers, doctors, lawyers, and judges, and social workers indicates that the number is exceedingly large, so large in fact as to cause every student of marriage and the family the deepest concern.

To complete the picture it is now necessary to add the large number of cases of disintegration in family life that have developed during the war period and that will continue to multiply as the months and years pass. The absence of the father or mother or both from the home; the preoccupation of parents with problems outside the home circle; the consequent neglect of children; the breaking up of the family

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unit;—all these conditions have led to a disorganization of family life that profoundly affects the whole social structure. These conditions we find not only in towns that are the center of war booms but in all communities across the country. We must remember that the family is the basic social unit and that if the family unit is threatened the whole structure of society is in danger.

### II. CAUSES

The significant and tragic fact that we discover in the study of divorce statistics is that 36% of the divorces are granted during the first 4 years of marriage and that 66% are granted during the first 9 years of marriage. The first 10 years of married life is also the time during which it seems the largest number of estrangements and separations take place. The causes assigned in court action do not reveal the true causes of the breakdowns. This is generally understood by every student. The fact that so large a percentage of estrangements, separations, and divorces occur during the first decade of married life seems to indicate, on the basis of studies made, one or more of five conditions:

1. A number of young people who marry are utterly unsuited to each other and therefore ought not to marry but do not discover this fact until they live together for some little time.
2. The foundations on which marriage and family life rest, the legal, the economic, the biological, the psychological, or the ethical, are either weak or defective; but these weaknesses and defects are not corrected as they very often could be in the light of present-day knowledge and through modern methods and techniques.
3. The young man and the young woman or both are unprepared by education and training for marriage and family life and therefore are unable to cope with the problems that marriage and family life always bring and that become especially complicated in these difficult days.
4. The couple lack during the early and always critical years of marriage the counsel and guidance of experienced men and women that in many cases could save them from dissension and prevent the disruption of their married life through expert discussion of problems and the adjustment of personality conflicts.
5. During a war period many couples marry who are in their adolescent immature stage; many marry impetuously and in

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undue haste; and many marry and separate for an indefinite period, with no opportunity to adjust themselves to each other and to build up comradeship. These marriages as we know from past experience are doomed from the outset to disappointment and disillusionment.

### III. THE SERVICE OF THE HOME, THE SCHOOL, THE CHURCH, AND WELFARE AGENCIES

At the present time we are depending largely upon the services of four agencies to correct conditions and to protect marriage and to conserve family life, namely, the home, the school, the church, and the agencies in the field of social welfare. Many parents realize their responsibility to prepare their children properly for marriage and family life, but most parents are at a serious disadvantage, especially in this period of social change and insecurity. They admit that they are unable successfully to solve the problems they themselves face and therefore are unable to properly equip and to direct their children. They also lack, it seems, the time that is necessary to establish confidence and cooperation between themselves and their children.

The schools do no more than make a beginning in the development of a proper program. In the high schools of our State little is done except to arrange for lectures on the biological level of sex education or to conduct courses in elementary home economics. In many of the colleges in the State courses are now given on marriage and family relationships. These courses however reach a very limited group and in most colleges the courses are attended chiefly by women. In other words the makers of the college curriculum disregard the important social fact that fully seventy-five per cent of college men and women will marry and do little if anything to prepare them for husbandhood and wifehood and parenthood.

The churches of the State, it must also be admitted, have made little progress in this important field of service. Many ministers appreciate that they are in a strategic position to serve family life; but the truth is that only a limited number of ministers are properly equipped to deal with these problems adequately. The result is that only a very few churches and synagogues offer courses on the subject of marriage and family life and arrange for a consultation service for the members of the congregation and the community. It is also evident that the churches and synagogues reach only a small part of the population. Nearly one-half of the marriages that

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take place in the State are performed not by ministers but by civil servants.

Welfare agencies, especially those engaged in work with families, are in many instances well equipped to counsel and guide and serve families in difficulty and distress. The staff is composed of men and women who have had special training in individual and family case work. But family welfare agencies even in these times when relief is not a major part of their program reach only a limited group. We have not yet progressed to the point where they are in a position to place their training and experience and facilities at the service of the larger groups in the community.

### IV. THE SERVICE OF THE STATE

The subject of marriage and the family in modern times has been transferred from the canon law of the church to the civil law of the State. In the State of New York it is covered in the Domestic Relations Law which constitutes chapter fourteen of the consolidated laws of the State of New York adopted February 17, 1909. It would seem, therefore, that the major responsibility for the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family would rest upon the State itself. When we study the service that the State is rendering, however, we discover that the State is in no way adequately meeting its responsibility in the matter of marriage and family life. All that the State is doing directly can be summed up in the following sentences:

1. The State is enforcing a marriage law that every student of marriage and the family realizes is obsolete and ineffective in many of its sections. As a piece of social legislation it lags far behind our social knowledge and experience.
2. The State issues the license to marry through license clerks who are political appointees and who lack any of the training and experience that would permit them to determine wisely who should and who should not be allowed to marry. No effort whatever is made to counsel those who apply for the marriage license.
3. The State records the marriage license in the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the Department of Health but makes no attempt to study the records or to assemble material that would aid us in a better understanding of marriage problems.
4. The State has established the Domestic Relations Court. This court however does not begin to deal with the cases until

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they come within its jurisdiction, that is, until the problems of marriage and family life reach an acute stage and the breakdown has actually occurred.

5. The State grants divorce through the Supreme Court on the one ground of adultery when no other solution seems possible.
6. Indirectly the State is endeavoring to give some protection to marriage and to the conservation of the family through the Departments of Health, Education, and Social Welfare, and more particularly in these days through the program of social security and war services. But these Departments concern themselves more with the problems of individuals rather than with the problems of the family as a unit of treatment and social concern.

### V. SOME SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Society suffers constantly and increasingly as a result of the failure of the State to develop an adequate program to protect marriage and to conserve the family. Children involved in cases of estrangement, separation, and divorce are reared in the wrong environment and atmosphere, suffer neglect, and are always in danger of drifting into some form of waywardness and delinquency. Men and women are incapacitated to live a normal social life and frequently become social liabilities.

An important consequence of the failure of the State adequately to meet its responsibilities in this matter is unnecessary cost of care and an increase in state expenditures. The State is compelled to bear the cost of court proceedings and the maintenance of the courts that deal with the problems of marriage and family life. The State is also compelled to assume the cost of the physical and mental cases that result from the breakdown in marriage and family life. The State is likewise compelled to undertake the care of children committed to orphan asylums and reformatories from broken homes. Every student of social problems will agree that if marriage could be properly protected and the home properly conserved a large part of these expenditures could be saved.

The most serious consequence however is the damage that is done to social life and to our democracy. The family is not only the threshold of democracy, it is the very matrix in which democracy is conceived and nourished. In spite of all the changes that have taken place in the past the family has proved to be the best institution in which to rear well-developed and fully rounded personalities

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and in which to prepare children to become citizens of a democratic state. It is clear therefore that if we allow disintegration to develop in family life we are destroying the very institution in which the state of tomorrow is being nurtured and fashioned.

### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

After serious study of this problem and consultation with many men and women we earnestly urge upon the Governor of the State of New York the following recommendations:

#### (1) *A Conference on Marriage and the Family*

We recommend that the Governor sponsor and support a conference on marriage and family life during the spring of 1944. This conference to which both experts and laymen would be invited should, we believe, deal with five major topics: a) the service of the home to marriage and family life; b) the program of the school and college in the matter of marriage and family life; c) the work of the church and synagogue for marriage and family life; d) projects developed by social welfare agencies for the advancement of family welfare; e) the responsibility of the State for the protection of marriage and the conservation of the family. The New York State Conference on Marriage and the Family would undertake to organize this conference if the Governor would agree to sponsor it and to deliver the principal address.

#### (2) *Commission on Marriage and the Family*

We recommend that the Governor appoint a commission to study this problem in all its aspects and to present a program to the Legislature and to the Governor. This commission, we believe, should be composed of members of the Legislature, justices of the Domestic Relations Court, and the Supreme Court, educators, lawyers, physicians, and ministers who are accepted as authorities in the matter of marriage and family life, and also representatives of the leading social agencies of the State. This commission would discover, we believe, not only that the breakdowns in marriage and family life have reached a point that compels action by the State itself but that the young people of the State are demanding preparation and protection that is not now being given. Young men and women of this generation seem to realize that they have a larger freedom of choice and less supervision in conduct than ever before; and in every conference that is called they are insisting upon programs that will



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help them to establish the proper social relationships and that will prepare them for the responsibility of marriage and family life.

### (3) *Bureau on Marriage and the Family*

We recommend that the Governor organize a Bureau on Marriage and the Family to work under his personal direction and as a part of the Executive Office. This Bureau, we believe, should be composed of representatives of the major departments of the State Government, that is, the Departments of Health, Education, Social Welfare, Hygiene, and Correction. The head of this Bureau should not be a representative of any one of the Departments but someone who is an expert and an authority in the field of marriage and family life to be appointed by the Governor and to be directly responsible to him. It would be the function of this Bureau to translate into social practice the findings of the Commission on Marriage and the Family and to organize a program for the State that would serve as a precedent for the State Department on Marriage and the Family recommended in the next article.

### (4) *A State Department on Marriage and the Family*

We recommend the establishment of a new Department of State Government to be known as the Department of Marriage and the Family or the Department of Domestic Relations. This Department of Government, we believe, should be coordinate with the Department of Health, the Department of Education, and the Department of Public Welfare and should be in charge of the ablest experts in the field of marriage and family life that can be secured. In this Brief it is impossible to do more than merely outline the purpose and program of this new Department that eventually must be established to protect marriage and to conserve the family.

1. Revision of the Marriage Law. The marriage law of the State should be revised so as to correct its weaknesses. At the present time the law does not require a sufficient interval between the time of application for a marriage license and the time the ceremony may be performed. Many states now require an interval of at least five days between the time of application and the time of issuance of the marriage license. The law at present allows residents of other states to secure a license in New York State and requires no proof of residence within the State. The law should require proof of residence or a license

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from the State in which the parties to the contract reside. The law at present requires couples to submit to a blood test in order to determine the presence or absence of syphilis in a communicable stage. The law should require a thorough and complete examination by a competent physician not only to discover the presence of venereal disease but the weaknesses of which both parties should be aware in order to safeguard themselves during married life. The law at present requires no preparation whatever. It should require in its educational system at least elementary courses in the problems of marriage and family life in order that the State may be assured that those who enter marriage have some preparation therefor.

2. Administration of the Law. The marriage license should be issued only by men and women who by virtue of training and experience are competent to serve as license clerks. Every clerk authorized to issue a marriage license should be required to take a civil service examination. This examination if properly prepared would place in charge of the Marriage License Bureau a new corps of civil servants who understand the problems of marriage and the family and who, therefore, would be able to protect to some extent the young people and the state against the dangers that now menace marriage and family life. It is important also that the license be issued in an office and an environment that will impress the young people with the seriousness and sacredness of marriage.
3. Courses in Preparation for Marriage. The State should prepare courses that would be given at times convenient for the people that need them and in every section of the city in which they are required. The courses now being offered by private and semi-private agencies and educational institutions would serve as a basis for the courses to be offered by the State. These courses should be made a part of the program of adult education now being developed.
4. Consultation Centers. The State through its new Department should promote the development of Consultation Centers to which the unmarried and the married can come for counsel and guidance when difficulties arise. These Centers established by the State would supplement the Centers now being maintained by private agencies and churches and would reach the large group of men and women that are now not only without counsel and guidance but unaware that counsel and guidance are avail-

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able to them. These Consultation Centers would do much to prevent the breakdowns that now occur and appear in the Domestic Relations Court and the Divorce Court. These Consultation Centers would also anticipate and prevent many of the hasty marriages that now occur and would also make more adequate provision for the care of children who are now neglected and easily develop into delinquents.

5. Research. It is most important that this Department of the State carefully study the effect of social conditions upon marriage and the family. Improper housing, low incomes, long hours of labor, unwholesome occupations, all have a serious effect upon marriage and family life. Only those who are associated with agencies that deal with the family realize the effect upon the family and marriage of the lack of recreational facilities, evil neighborhood conditions, and unemployment. It is impossible to rear the right kind of a family in the wrong kind of a home. It is impossible to maintain a family upon a normal level of life with a sub-normal income. It is impossible to build up in marriage and family life today the proper standards and the finer type of relationship as long as social conditions mean insecurity. As long as the family is insecure society will suffer and the future be unsafe.

The State does not hesitate to invest funds for research in other fields such as mineral resources, agriculture, and animal life as well as unemployment, crime, and disease. The State does not hesitate to maintain a program of conservation that includes fields and forests and natural parks. The State should not hesitate to invest funds in the study of marriage and the conservation of the family which is our basic social institution.

## APPENDIX

The standard textbooks on marriage and the family contain excellent bibliographies; a number of organizations active in the field of marriage and family life issue selected lists of publications from time to time; *Social Forces* under the direction of Prof. Ernest R. Groves publishes annually a full bibliography on marriage and the family. It is therefore unnecessary to add another list of books in this volume. Instead of duplicating what others have done so well it seems advisable merely to list the consultation centers and the organizations actively engaged in marriage and family counseling and to suggest that those who wish to study marriage and family counseling as it develops as an American discipline and procedure write to the centers and organizations for the material they issue in the form of pamphlets, magazines, books, and scientific studies.

### American Eugenics Society

President, Prof. Maurice A. Bigelow, 50 W. 50 St., New York 20, N.Y.

### American Home Economics Association

President, Prof. Dora L. Lewis, New York University, Department of Home Economics, Washington Square East, New York 3, N.Y.

### American Institute of Family Relations

Director, Paul Popenoe, Sc. D., 607 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, Calif.

### American Social Hygiene Association

Chairman, Dr. William F. Snow, 50 W. 50 St., New York 20, N.Y.

### Association for Family Living

Chairman, Mrs. Evelyn M. Duvall, 220 S. State St., Chicago, Ill.

### Bureau of Marriage Counsel and Sex Education

Director, Dr. Valeria H. Parker, 62 W. 58 St., New York 19, N.Y.

### Central Conference of American Rabbis, Committee on Marriage, the Family, and the Home

Chairman, Rabbi Stanley R. Brav, 1209 Cherry St., Vicksburg, Miss.

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### Child Study Association of America

Director, Mrs. Sidonie M. Gruenberg, 221 W. 57 St., New York 19, N.Y.

### Children's Bureau

Chief, Katharine F. Lenroot, Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

### Children's Welfare Federation

Director, Mrs. Helen Leighty, 435 Ninth Ave., New York 1, N.Y.

### Community Service Society of New York

Executive Director, Dr. Stanley P. Davies, 105 E. 22 St., New York 10, N.Y.

### Cost of Living Division, U.S. Department of Labor

Chief, Faith M. Williams, Washington, D.C.

### Department of Education, Health, Mental Hygiene, U.S. Public Health Service

Surgeon-General, Dr. Thomas Parran, 19th St. and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.

### Family Consultation Service

Director, Mrs. Anna Budd Ware, 312 W. 9 St., Cincinnati, Ohio

### Family Relations Bureau

Director, Dr. Edwith H. Swift, Witherell and Montcalm St., Detroit, Mich.

### Family Welfare Association of America

General Director, Richard Linton Swift, 122 E. 22 St., New York 10, N.Y.

### Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, Committee on Marriage and the Home

Chairman, Dr. L. Foster Wood, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

### Home Economics Bureau

Chief, Louise Stanley, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

### Information and Personal Service Department of the National Jewish Welfare Board

Director, Abraham Feitelberg, 145 E. 32 St., New York 16, N.Y.

### Institute for Marriage and Family Guidance

Director, Dr. Meyer E. Nimkoff, 140 S. Front St., Lewisburg, Pa.

### Institute of Euthenics

Director, Dr. Mary S. Fisher, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

### Jewish Institute on Marriage and the Family

Chairman, Dr. Sidney E. Goldstein, 40 W. 68 St., New York 23, N.Y.

### Marriage and Family Council, Inc.

Director, Mrs. Gladys Hoagland Groves, Chapel Hill, N.C.

### Marriage Counsel

Director, Mrs. Emily S. Mudd, M.S.W., 1930 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

## APPENDIX

### Marriage Study Association

Director, James C. Janney, M.D., 41 Bay State Road, Boston, Mass.  
Massachusetts Mothers' Health Council

Executive Director, Eugene L. Belisle, 143 Newbury St., Boston, Mass.  
Massachusetts Society for Social Hygiene, Counseling Service  
Chief Consultant, Lester W. Dearborn, 316 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass.

### Maternal Health Association

Director, Miss Gladys Gaylord, 2101 Adelbert Road, Cleveland, Ohio  
Merrill-Palmer School

Director, Dr. Robert G. Foster, 71 Ferry Ave., Detroit 2, Mich.  
National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association

Director, Dr. Janet Fowler Nelson, 600 Lexington Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

### National Committee on Maternal Health

Chairman, Dr. Haven Emerson, 2 E. 103 St., New York 29, N.Y.

### National Committee for Mental Hygiene

Medical Director, Dr. George S. Stevenson, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

### National Conference on Family Relations

President, Dr. Sidney E. Goldstein, 1126 E. 59 St., Chicago, Ill.

### National Council of Parent Education

Chairman, Prof. Joseph K. Folsom, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

### New York State Conference on Marriage and the Family

Chairman, Dr. Sidney E. Goldstein, 40 W. 68 Street, New York 23, N.Y.

### Personal Affairs of Military Personnel

52 Broadway, New York 4, N.Y.

### Planned Parenthood Association of America

President, Dr. Richard N. Pierson, 501 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

### San Diego Association for Family Living

Director, Dr. Oliver M. Butterfield, 614 Spreckels Building, Broadway at Second Ave. San Diego, Calif.

### Veterans Administration

Washington, D.C.

### Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor

Chief, Miss Frieda Miller, Washington, D.C.



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